

# Prov People up close and personal with Portland-area employees and volunteers

## Gbayou Garmondeh, Sr.

Patient transporter, Providence St. Vincent

*Often those with the least to give are the most generous. That's the case with Gbayou Garmondeh, a refugee from Liberia who sought political asylum in the United States after speaking out against the government during the civil war and being tortured. In Liberia he had a good job with an American-owned bank. In Oregon he is the primary breadwinner for his family here – as well as his mother and other relatives back in Africa. He also gives to his “new family” at Providence through the Employee Giving Campaign as a contributor to the Helping Hand fund. Gbayou (pronounced “Bye-you”) has a warm and generous spirit that makes his co-workers and patients smile.*

### How long have you been at Providence?

I started work here in housekeeping five years ago. After about one year a manager saw how nicely I cleaned an area and he asked if I wanted to work in transportation and I said yes. The job is going very good. The hospital is a beautiful place to be and I love it. I have made it my home. I hope that I will be able to take some classes and use my background to get a job in the business office or financial services.

When I first came to the U.S. I didn't have my family with me, and I stayed in Philadelphia where a friend of mine was living. But I had some cousins in Oregon and it seemed like a good place where my kids would have a better environment, so I made this my home.

With the help of the United Methodist



Church and Sister Lynda Thompson in Mission Integration, I was able to bring my whole family here.

### How are you adjusting?

I miss my friends, and my mother most of all. I hope I can bring her here someday, but I won't be able to do that until I'm a citizen – and that will take at least five years. In Liberia we had more time to visit with people – to socialize. Here, people spend more time at home with their family, or they are working. In Liberia people think money grows on trees in America. It is a great country, but you have to work hard for everything. My job is not easy, and I also referee about nine soccer games a week. It pays, but it's really more for the love of the game.

### What hopes do you have for your children?

We have a daughter, who is 22 and studying to be a C.N.A., and a son, who is 20, studying criminal justice. At home we have twin boys who are 13 and a girl who is nine.

One of my goals when I was growing up was to be a medical doctor, but we did not have the money for medical school. So my greatest happiness would be to see one of my children become a doctor and the rest become good persons in society. Even if I were dead I would be happy in my grave if that happened!

### How do you get your patients to smile so much?

When patients come into the hospital, they have problems. My job is to make them happy. When I pick them up I tell them my name and where I work. Then I say, “I'm here with your limo,” if they're on a stretcher, or “Please get into my Cadillac,” if they need a wheelchair. If they laugh, that is my reward. If I bring someone to surgery, I always try to come back and visit the patient later on to see how they are doing. To me, patients are my family when they are here.

One time when I was at the Saturday Market a woman came up to me and she said, “You are my husband's limo driver from the hospital!”

It really made my day knowing I made a difference in their lives at the hospital.

## Congratulations to Kathryn Rouse, POP Employee of the Month



Kudos to Kathryn Rouse, regional business office contact center manager, the November Employee of the Month at Providence Office Park.

This is what her co-workers had to say:

- Kathryn makes herself available for any and all assistance to not only her team, but the entire RBO.
- Her daily positive attitude is uplifting to all she encounters.
- Her energy is refreshing and her sense of humor is uplifting.

- Kathryn encourages her team to excel by holding contests and raffles that boost morale and make work fun.

- She always has an open door policy and gives her full attention to our concerns.

- Kathryn keeps her team informed by providing great communication on new processes.

- She cares for each one of her 50 employees, and no one could fill her shoes. She is one of a kind.

- I am blessed to be working with her.