



The Daily Courier

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Achievers: Mental illness alliance honors clinic psychiatrist

By Ken Hedler
The Daily Courier

Sunday, April 19, 2009



Terry Vaughan

PRESCOTT - Terry Vaughan said she fell "naturally" into the psychiatry field after she earned a medical degree from Indiana University.

"I was really fascinated to see people get better," Vaughan said.

"You have to stick with people and be very patient," said Vaughan, medical director at the West Yavapai Guidance Clinic for nearly 10 years. "You have to be patient to sort through the problems. You have to help them find solutions to their problems either with medication, treatment, making changes in their lives."

Vaughan is one of the best psychiatrists in the tri-city area, said Fred Trost, president of the Yavapai County chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. The alliance is an advocacy and support group for lay people who have mentally ill family members.

"She approaches (psychiatry) with a lot of common sense," Trost said. "She is very down to earth."

Trost, who has known Vaughan for eight years, successfully nominated her for recognition as one of 41 "exemplary psychiatrists" nationwide in 2009.

She will be honored in May at the annual conference of the American Psychiatric Association in San Francisco. The alliance will host a breakfast for the recipients.

The annual Exemplary Psychiatry awards recognize psychiatrists who have gone the extra mile to provide excellent clinical care, educate family members and the public, and help to reduce the stigma of mental illness, according to a press release from West Yavapai.

The award is about removing the stigma, Vaughan said.

"People do not need to be embarrassed," she said. "It is not a weakness to have a psychiatric illness. It is the same as having diabetes or high blood pressure."

Award recipients also have worked alongside alliance members in their communities as advocates for research, social services, insurance parity and other needs, the press release states.

Vaughan attends the monthly support group meetings of NAMI Yavapai County, Trost said.

Vaughan said she enjoys her work because she talks to people and helps them overcome crises.

As medical director, she supervises 11 medical staffers. She has been a psychiatrist for 16 years.

Vaughan, 48, lives in Prescott with husband Marc Kroll and their 4-year-old twins, Amanda and Lucas.

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