

SUNY Downstate Medical Center

University Hospital of Brooklyn UHB

Brooklyn



Transplant

vol.4, no.1

Summer 2005

WELCOME

In this issue of the Transplant Newsletter we take great pride and pleasure in saluting one of our transplant nurses – Diane Coard and pay tribute to her and her 25 years of service to our unit.

Those who have worked with Diane throughout the years – be they nurses or doctors – and those patients who had Diane as a caregiver - know how truly exceptional she is.

She is by far one of the most knowledgeable and skilled practitioners with whom I have had the privilege of working. She is an extraordinary teacher who has trained many nurses on the transplant unit. But what impresses me the most about Diane is her dedication to patient care. There is a quality about her that transcends being a competent professional. She genuinely cares about each and every patient and treats all as unique individuals.

Diane serves as a shining example of the caring, compassion, dedication and professionalism that all of the nurses on the Downstate Transplant unit embody.

Diane, on behalf of all your colleagues and the countless number of patients whose lives you've touched; allow us to say congratulations upon reaching this milestone in your career. It has been an honor having you on board our team and we look forward to having you with us for many more years to come.



Dale Distant, M.D.
Director, Transplant Surgery
SUNY Downstate Medical Center

Spotlight On *Diane Coard, RN* TRANSPLANT NURSE FOR 25 YEARS



Diane Coard, RN

For the last 25 years there has been one constant in the lives of those patients who have received a kidney transplant at SUNY Downstate – Diane Coard.

For the last quarter century, Diane, a mother of three grown daughters and Charge Nurse of the Transplant Unit has cared for

more than 3,000 transplant patients.

Modest, self-effacing and constantly in motion on the fast paced transplant unit, one quickly gets the impression that Diane is uncomfortable talking about herself.

Although, immensely proud of her work, she simply states "I just want people to know that I enjoy what I do and I enjoy being on this Service," when asked what she would like people to know about her.

Those who have worked with Diane and the patients she has taken care of over the years talk about a woman they tremendously admire and respect.

Diane is described as a dedicated and skilled practitioner whose compassion, patience and caring make the difficult journey of the transplant patient infinitely easier. She is a loyal and hard working colleague; a solid team player; a teacher and a mentor to junior nurses. And according to all who were inter-

viewed, a person who knows the ins and outs of transplant better than anyone else.

"She is genuine," says Transplant Unit Head Nurse Nelcia Trim, "Patients and their families immediately sense that they are dealing with someone who cares. She has a real knack for making patients and their families relax despite what they are going through," says Trim.

Sharmaine Alleyne, a daytime nurse on the Transplant unit who has been trained by Diane agrees: "family members need someone like Diane. They immediately sense that she knows what she is doing and knows what the patient needs."

According to transplant recipient Kelly Cosgrove, having Diane as her nurse made a difference. "A tremendous difference," she adds. "I was scared of the unknown and so unsure as to whether or not this was going to work," she says. "It was Diane's bedside manner that helped me get through that time. She was always so caring and compassionate" says Cosgrove.

According to Diane the prime joy of her



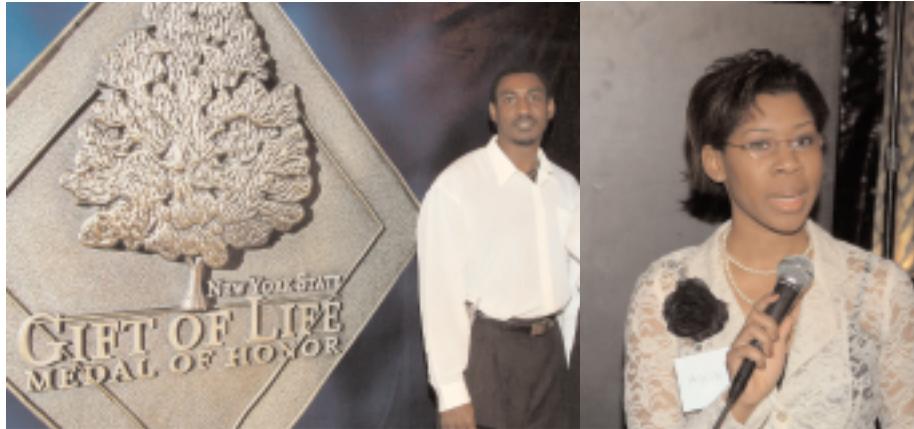
Brooklyn Transplant

job is seeing the transformations amongst her patients take place. "What I try to instill in each and every one of my patients is a sense of responsibility."

"The journey for a kidney transplant recipient does not end when they get their kidney.

In fact it only begins. It's really remarkable," she says, "to see an individual being given a second opportunity at life and know that you played a role in that process." It is my job to teach them how to take care of themselves after they leave my care," says Coard. ■

SUNY DOWNSTATE DONORS RECEIVE GIFT OF LIFE AWARD



(L) Roderick Dawkins, who donated a kidney to by his sister Tikesha. (R) Argelle Bross donated a kidney to her brother, Anim.

As part of New York States' efforts to recognize the life-saving contribution of organ and tissue donors and to raise public awareness of the critical need for organ and tissue donation, legislation was signed by Governor Pataki in 2002 establishing the New York State Gift of Life Medal of Honor. At a ceremony to honor those who have given the gift of life at the famed Copacabana Club in New York City on December 5, 2004, Medals of Honor were given to each of 800 donors and donor families, including ten living donors from Downstate.

For Argelle Bross, the Gift of Life award she was receiving – could not be better named. Argelle, who donated her kidney to her baby brother Anim at SUNY Downstate in 2003 says "By giving my brother a kidney, I gave him the Gift of Life. I feel I gave him back his life and now he has a second chance."

For Diana Gallardo who donated her kidney to her sister Virginia at Downstate in 1991, there were no words to express the emotions she felt when the award was presented to her. "My sister was near death when I donated my kidney to her. To see her now leading a normal life, raising her beautiful family is nothing short of a miracle," she says.

According to Diana, the transplant was more than just a gift of life. It was an opportunity to bond with a sister that she barely knew growing up.

When Diana was very young, Virginia moved away from their home in Columbia and went to live in the United States. It wasn't until Virginia got very sick and Diana tested as a match that she went to New York to help her sister.

"Not only was I able to do something for my sister that helped save her life but now we are so much a part of each others lives. We are extremely close," she says.

Roderick Dawkins who donated his kidney to his sister Tikesha this past year was also deeply moved by the evening.

"I think what I will most remember about the night," says Roderick "was the dancing. Seeing people who were probably lifeless before their operation now so full of life and energy wanting to celebrate and enjoy life. That really touched me a lot," he says.

What Argelle will remember most about the event was looking into the audience and seeing her brother in the audience.

"My mother used to call him her angel. And I felt like we were each other angels. I helped him and he helped me. He gave me the greatest gift of all – to see how precious life really is."



Sisters, Diana Gallardo (R) and Virginia (L)

DONOR INFORMATION GROUP

If you're considering living donor transplantation and want more information, potential donors are invited to attend the next meeting of the Donor Information Group. The meetings offer potential donors the opportunity to meet past donors and hear firsthand accounts of what to expect. Discussions led by the Transplant Coordinator are lively and informative and allow prospective donors to share their questions and concerns openly with individuals who have already been through the experience.

For more information about living donor transplantation, please call (718) 270-3169.

PRE-TRANSPLANT SEMINARS

The Transplantation Division's Pre-Transplant Tuesday Seminars are an important part of the kidney transplant experience. You will have an individual consultation with the Transplant Coordinator and Transplant Surgeon and attend a slide presentation on all aspects of the transplantation process, from pre-op to post-op.

For more information about kidney transplantation, please call us at : (718) 270-3169

www.downstate.edu/transplant

Brooklyn Transplant is published by the Marketing Department, University Hospital of Brooklyn

design: Dorcas Gelabert
photo: Ernest Cuni



SUNY
DOWNSTATE
Medical Center

UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OF BROOKLYN
450 Clarkson Avenue - Box 23
Brooklyn, NY 11203