

PEOPLE OF PTS

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"Today I am very thankful and grateful for God's precious gifts to me—the gifts of life and grace," says Minh Phuong Townner '13. A survivor of the Communist takeover of her native South Vietnam, Minh barely escaped execution after watching her father, brother, and sister being shot. Captured and imprisoned, she suffered harsh and cruel treatment, loneliness, and despair. Now as a chaplain at Prince William Medical Center in Manassas, Va., Minh is uniquely prepared to walk with patients and family members on their journey of suffering, pain, death, and dying.

From Vietnam, Minh eventually escaped to Taiwan and then France before moving to Australia to seek a better future. In 2005, she moved to Virginia, where she married and began volunteering at Vienna Presbyterian Church. In 2009 began studies at Pittsburgh Seminary to pursue her call to ministry.

Minh was one of six people chosen from a pool of 100 applicants for the one-year chaplaincy training program at Hospital in York, Pa. It "could be demanding at times, such as when I was on call for a 28-hour shift," says Minh.

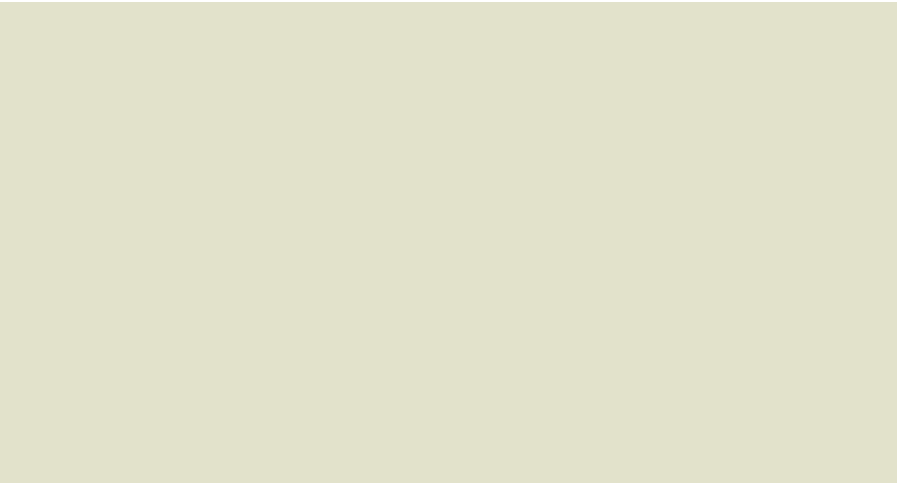
"I learned how to support and meet people where they are, regardless of their often different beliefs. Wisdom, discernment, and diplomacy are some of the many characteristics and skills I need as a chaplain, but most of all I need help from God and the Holy Spirit working through me. As I continue on this path, God is revealing to me each day that chaplaincy is my calling."

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