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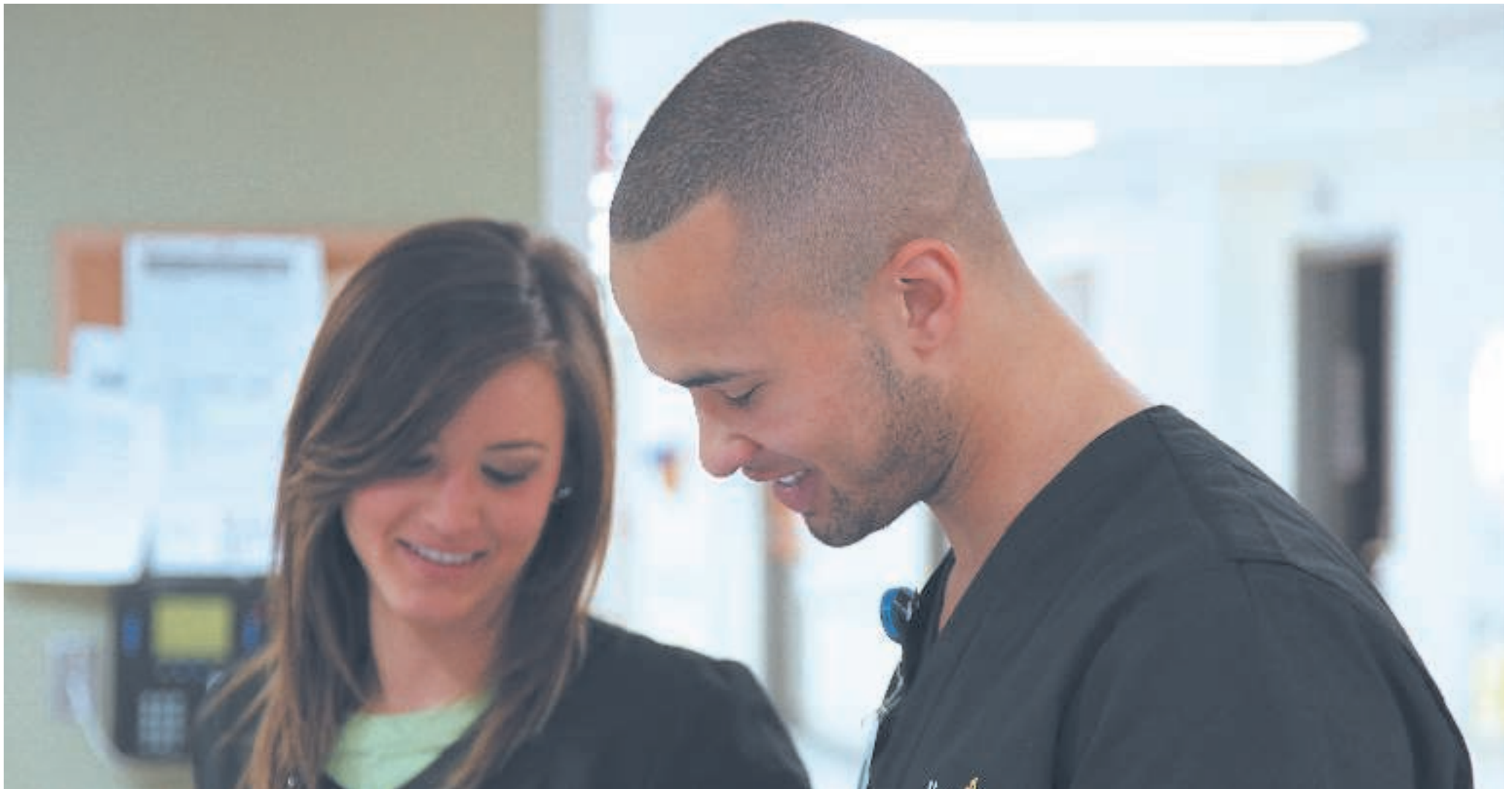
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The Heart of Health Care

BY SARAH GERREIN, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS

St. Louis is proud to be a national leader in health care and medical/life sciences research. Our medical institutions draw top talent from around the globe.

For the third consecutive year, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reaffirmed this reputation and honored the area's nursing professionals with the Nurses: The Heart of Health Care program - a contest, section and recognition event supported by presenting sponsor BJC HealthCare and title sponsors Centene Corporation and Mercy.

The nurses encountered throughout the five-month program share several identifying characteristics: compassion, respect and empathy. They work in hospitals, clinics, schools, residential facilities, in-home care and even virtually. They educate, console, relate, comfort and endear themselves to patients and families.

These tireless professionals deserve every bit of recognition during National Nurses Week which began on May 6.

THE 101 NURSE NOMINEES:

The contest began with a call for nominations. The public was encouraged to nominate nursing professionals who made an impact on the lives of loved ones and the community at large. The community answered with over 300 nominations. These nominations were then pared down to a pool of 101.

JUDGING THE TOP 10:

Three independent judges, Debra Ellerbrook, Mariea Snell, and Quita Stephens, reviewed the 101 nominees and selected the nine winners featured within this section. The 10th winner was chosen by our readers. Read about each winner within this section and online at STLtoday.com/nurses.

RECOGNITION CEREMONY:

The final 10 nurses were honored with a luncheon at the Moolah Shrine Center. Donna Bischoff, the vice president of sales and marketing at the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, opened the ceremony and introduced special guest speaker Denise Murphy, BSN, MPH, FAAN, vice president of patient care systems and the chief nurse executive for BJC HealthCare. Prior to accepting their awards, a video of each of the 10 nurses was shown to an audience comprised of the winners, their families and coworkers. Each guest left the ceremony with a gift bag full of giveaways.

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OUR JUDGES

DEBRA ELLERBROOK



Debra Ellerbrook served as the director of Concordia University Wisconsin – St. Louis Online Center for the last nine-and-a-half years until their closure in June 2018. She is also an adjunct instructor and curriculum developer for courses in management, marketing and retail. She has an extensive background in retail and wholesale sales and management.

She holds a bachelor's degree in business with a minor in psychology and a master's degree in marketing, both from Webster University. She has served two terms as president of the St. Louis Area Health Care Recruiters Organization.

MARIEA SNELL, DNP, APRN, FNP-C MARYVILLE UNIVERSITY



Dr. Mariea Snell is an assistant professor and coordinator of the Doctor of Nursing Practice programs at Maryville University. She also serves as vice president of the Missouri State Board of Nursing. In addition, she works as a family nurse practitioner at Maven Clinic Inc., where she diagnoses and treats common primary care conditions using telehealth.

Before coming to Maryville, Dr. Snell worked at Saint Louis University, where she instructed students on adult, pediatric, women's and geriatric health. Prior to that, she was a research nurse of infectious diseases at Washington University in St. Louis for four years before earning her FNP.

She holds a bachelor's in nursing from Goldfarb School of Nursing at Barnes-Jewish College, a master's of science in nursing from Indiana State University and a doctorate in nursing from Saint Louis University.

QUITA S. STEPHENS, MSN, MSW, BHA, CMRN UNITEDHEALTHCARE



Quita Stephens works for UnitedHealthcare as a board-certified registered nurse case manager. She is also the president of the Black Nursing Association of Greater St. Louis. In her role as president, she hopes to join forces with fellow nurses to assist in community outreach and provide education to the underserved. Before UnitedHealthcare, she worked in various areas of nursing including, trauma, OR, Med-Surg and oncology.

She holds her bachelor's degree in healthcare management, a certification in case management, a master's in social work from Saint Louis University and a master's in nursing leadership from Walden University.

KAREN FAWCETT

RN

Missouri Baptist Medical Center

BY NATALIE MACIAS, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Compassionate. Conscientious. Cautious. Thorough. Intelligent. Focused. These are the words that Lori Puzzo uses to describe her colleague and mentor of 31 years, Karen Fawcett, patient placement coordinator in bed management at Missouri Baptist Medical Center.

Fresh out of nursing school, Fawcett was the first nurse that Puzzo worked with and immediately became the model for Puzzo's career. "I realized that day that Karen was the nurse that I wanted to be," she said.

Fawcett worked on the medical-surgical floor at Missouri Baptist for 18 years, 15 of them as a manager. Today, she works in bed management, essentially the air traffic control of the entire hospital. When a patient needs a bed, whether they are coming from the emergency room, a different facility or the cardiac catheterization lab, she makes it happen.

This role is a perfect fit for Fawcett, with 37 years of experience at Missouri Baptist under her belt. "I was pretty much doing bed management before bed management even existed," she said.

In her 15 years in management, Fawcett focused solely on empowering her staff and treating them with respect. "Management in nursing really is a trickle-down effect," she said. "If I was good to my staff, they'd be good to their patients." For example, her cardinal rule was that she never ate lunch or dinner before any of her nurses.

Hierarchies were never part of her management style and she made sure that her staff knew it. Puzzo witnessed this while working alongside Fawcett. No task was ever too menial for her.



KAREN FAWCETT AND COLLEAGUE
PHOTO BY TYBEE STUDIOS

Bedpans and bedside commodes were never beneath her. "If there was a green light on in a patient room, she went," Puzzo said. "Although she's my boss, Karen never made me feel like a subordinate."

In her current role in bed management, she follows suit with excellent patient care, although indirectly now. "Even in this capacity [bed management], Karen is still the same motivator and leader," Puzzo said. "Our job is complex, and she is just as focused on providing good patient care."

Fawcett even adapted a protocol that her bed management nurses follow. It ensures that everyone is modeling the same practice, and there is a continuous standard of care to all patients they place in beds, Puzzo explained.

Fawcett's advice to nursing students, is simply to always follow through. "If

you tell someone that you are going to get back to them with an answer, make sure you do it. It means a lot to people when you say you are going to do something and you actually do it."

This philosophy has made for a successful career.

"She is the backbone of what true nursing should be," Puzzo said. "If I can be one-tenth of the nurse that Karen is, I would be happy."

AT A GLANCE

NURSING PROGRAM:

Missouri Baptist School of Nursing

AREA OF FOCUS:

Adult Medical-Surgical

YEARS OF SERVICE:

37 years

“Management in nursing really is a trickle-down effect. If I was good to my staff, they'd be good to their patients.”



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We also partner with university and colleges to create educational opportunities for employees. These educational partnerships were created with our employees' busy lives in mind. In fact, many of the courses and programs are offered online and at a reduced rate for employees. SSM Health currently partners with universities and colleges across the region, offering reduced tuition rates, a host of degree programs and scholarship opportunities with the goal of providing affordable continuing higher education for our employees.

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Congratulations **Eritrea Habtemariam**

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ERITREA HABTEMARIAM

RN

SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital - St. Louis

BY NATALIE MACIAS, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Her grandmother didn't have to die that day in Africa as a result of a car accident. Eritrea Habtemariam (Nurse E.), cardiac telemetry nurse at SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital, believes Western medicine could have saved her grandmother's life. The impact was profound.

"From then on I knew I needed to help people so they would never have to face what my grandmother faced," she said.

Nurse E. stays true to her roots by living out the values instilled by her family at a young age in Eritrea, Africa.

"Back home, my grandpa always told me, 'do good – to everyone,'" she said. Nurse E. believes it's her mission to carry on her family legacy in the U.S. "People in Africa live off so little and give so much," she said. "As a nurse, I want to be that person."

The person she strives to be: compassionate, respectful and mindful of underserved communities, neatly aligns with the mission and values of SSM Health. She explains, "These are the things that I grew up hearing – and that is what drew me to St. Mary's. That's why I'm still here. I truly feel like I am right at home here. It's my home away from home."



ERITREA HABTEMARIAM AND PATIENT
PHOTO BY TYBEE STUDIOS

She lives out this mission by providing outstanding patient care and as an educator. In addition to leading the cardiac telemetry floor, she is also an adjunct professor at the Chamberlain College of Nursing.

One of the first items on professor E.'s agenda is to dispel students' misconceptions about the nursing field: "Nursing is not glamorous. It's really hard work and your heart has to be in it to have a long, successful career."

She also feels it's important to share her perspective on compassion and community from a global standpoint. Seeing how little people survive on in a third-world country makes Nurse E.

appreciate the things her students often take for granted. "I like to remind them to be compassionate and give back even if you are getting nothing in return," she said. "That's what nursing is all about – it encompasses this idea."

Nurse E. hopes to return to Africa one day to collaborate with hospitals on improving patient care as well as general health and wellness – a pursuit fueled by memories of her grandmother.

AT A GLANCE

NURSING PROGRAM:
Western Governor's University

AREA OF FOCUS:
Cardiac Telemetry, Adjunct Professor

YEARS OF SERVICE:
14 years

"Nursing is not glamorous. It's really hard work and your heart has to be in it to have a long, successful career."



MARSHA HILL

RN, BSN, MSM, CNM
Mercy Birthing Center

BY NATALIE MACIAS, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A series of lessons guided Marsha Hill's career path. High school biology and human anatomy classes piqued her interest in health care. In college, she considered attending medical school to become a doctor, but after being exposed to the nursing program, she decided that focusing on patient and bedside care as a nurse was a better fit. Hill's pregnancy during the last six months of nursing school shaped her specialty and passion.

"I received such excellent care from the midwives and nurses during my pregnancy and delivery," said Marsha Hill, certified nurse midwife at Mercy Birthing Center. "Because of that, I felt that I wanted to offer the same to other people. That's how I landed in maternal, child health and labor and delivery."

Today, Hill is exposed to a unique spectrum of mothers and infants in her role as a midwife at Mercy. She has delivered nearly 1,000 infants since she began her career 15 years ago. Each patient is different and every day offers a unique experience – her favorite part of the job. "Getting to know so many different people on a personal level is my favorite part of midwifery. I get to support my patients emotionally, forming a bond with them. While learning about each of them, I learn a little more about myself," she said.

Pregnancy, labor and delivery can be a frightening time for many women, and Hill's role is to guide the birth experience from beginning to end. From prenatal care to labor, newborn care and even



MARSHA HILL AND COLLEAGUE
PHOTO BY TYBEE STUDIOS

postpartum check-ups, she medically assists each patient. But the most important part of her job is emotional assistance.

"The emotional support aspect of my job is huge," she said. "Relieving anxiety while taking care of patients and their families starts with me. I realize that if I am panicking, they are going to sense that. If I'm calm, they know that everything will be okay. That is what I appreciated about having a midwife when I was going through the experience myself."

When asked about a situation in midwifery that stands out, Hill explains that while every birth is amazing, the ones that don't go as planned tend to stay with her. In these instances she is able to build an even deeper bond with her patients.

"Those patients really stick out in my mind. After going through very difficult things during pregnancy and labor, they show this tremendous strength. These moments are really impactful to me as a nurse."

As long as she remains impacted by patients, Hill knows she is where she needs to be. When her patients cry – happy or sad – she cries with them.

The lessons that guided Hill's career are transferable, and her advice to anyone thinking about going into the nursing field is to listen and follow the people with experience. "You can learn a tremendous amount from them, especially how to apply everything you learned in school in a real life patient care setting," she said. "You can't learn that in a book."

AT A GLANCE

NURSING PROGRAM:

Missouri Southern State University
University of Illinois at Chicago

AREA OF FOCUS:

Midwifery

YEARS OF SERVICE:

15 years

“Getting to know so many different people on a personal level is my favorite part of midwifery.”



MERCY NURSING BRINGS MISSION TO LIFE THROUGH DIGNITY AND JUSTICE

SPONSORED CONTENT BY NATILE MACIAS, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

To be a nurse at Mercy is to embrace the responsibility of patient care.

“Here at Mercy, we are people who are serving, people who are compassionate; we are always wanting to advance in order to do whatever we can to take care of our patients. We are here to help,” says Corin Allen, Director of Heart and Vascular Services at Mercy Hospital South.

Mercy, named one of the top five largest U.S. health systems in 2018, 2017 and 2016 by IBM Watson Health, serves millions annually. This includes more than 40 acute care and specialty (heart, children’s, orthopedic and rehab) hospitals, 900 physician practices, 45,000 co-workers and 2,400 Mercy Clinic physicians in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma.

Serving the St. Louis community, Mercy has five local hospitals, employing a total of 5,195 nurses altogether.

As a faith-based organization, Mercy is rooted in its Mission of bringing to life the healing ministry of Jesus through care and service. There are five core values that guide Mercy nurses and the directions they take with their care every day – dignity, excellence, justice, service and stewardship.

A RICH HISTORY OF SERVING

Mercy’s mission and values began with the walking Sisters of Mercy who would seek out those in need and deliver care in the streets of Dublin, Ireland, serving the poor, the homeless and women and children regardless of their culture or background.

“We are proud to be a part of that heritage—it’s what really sets us apart from other health care systems,” said Marie Graham, Director of Medical-Surgical and Women’s Health at Mercy Hospital South. “We really feel like it is up to us to carry on that ministry that the Sisters of Mercy started.”

With dignity as their core value, each nurse strives to treat each individual just as the walking Sisters did. “Dignity to us means respecting everyone,” said Graham.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY MERCY

The core value of dignity intertwines with another value that is on the top of the list – justice. Mercy nurses have a special focus on those who are economically poor, making sure each individual within the hospital and in the community has services available to them.

Thanks to technology, some of these extended services include the Mercy Virtual Care Center, or a “hospital without beds.” The virtual care allows clinicians to “see” patients wherever they are – whether it be in the Intensive Care Unit on a two-way camera or in the comfort of their own home via iPad.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Mercy offers a variety of opportunities for nurses to continue their education and eventually move into leadership roles.

Some of these opportunities include:

- Tuition & Professional Development reimbursement programs
- Nursing loan forgiveness
- Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)
- Student loan refinancing discount
- Mercy scholarships and grants
- University partnerships providing discounted tuition, scholarships, and waived fees



Nurses Allen and Graham have taken advantage of these opportunities. Allen started at Mercy as a patient care tech and Graham began her Mercy career as an LPN. Both nurses have been able to move into leadership roles thanks to the opportunities that Mercy provides their staff.

“The opportunities are limitless,” said Graham. “Whether it be advanced practice or a higher level care in leadership, all of these options are available to any Mercy nurse.”

“I started as a patient care tech here, and over the years I have benefitted from the tuition reimbursement programs and recently started my master’s program,” said Allen. “I am very blessed to be a nurse here at Mercy.”

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Nursing leaders at Mercy embrace the decision-making process by involving every member of their team, recognizing that each individual plays an important role when it comes to caring for their patients. “Our professional, shared governance creates an atmosphere of autonomy around the practice of nursing. Nurses own our nursing care as they follow the Mercy nursing professional practice model. That allows them to create a therapeutic environment for our patients and use their expertise

to deliver high quality care,” says Donna Frazier, Chief Nursing Officer at Mercy Hospital South.

Mercy’s leadership listens and involves their co-workers as well as each patient’s specific wishes. The first step in approach to care is discovering the patient’s wants and needs.

“My goal as a nurse may be different than the patient’s goal,” says Allen. “This goes back to the idea of dignity – we listen and respect what they want and how they want to get there.”



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- MERCY ST. LOUIS: 703
- MERCY SOUTH: 500
- MERCY JEFFERSON: 173
- MERCY WASHINGTON: 74
- MERCY LINCOLN: 19

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LAURIE HYDE

RN
Nurses for Newborns

BY JENNIFER L. MASON, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Nursing is all Laurie Hyde has ever known. From the age of 3 she tended to friends, family and every animal she came across. Although she pronounced it 'nuss' instead of nurse, she bandaged up and cared for each one just like Florence Nightingale.

As Hyde entered high school, she was deliberate in taking classes that would lead her into the nursing profession. Throughout college, she worked as a nurse's aide and became very comfortable working with patients and families. Her passion and determination evolved into a 40-year nursing career. Today, Hyde works full time as a registered nurse at Nurses for Newborns and also works part time as a telephone triage nurse at St. Louis Children's Hospital.

"Working as a nurse's aide throughout college gave me the skills to become a team player," Hyde said. "Later, as a new registered nurse (RN), I was assigned my own team of nurse's aides during my first couple of years in the medical-surgical unit. It was an honor to mentor and walk alongside them as RNs had once done for me when I was an aide."

Hyde discovered her love of working with mothers and babies in the nursery at Normandy Osteopathic Hospital South. Regional Hospital on Delmar is where she received labor and delivery and high-risk prenatal experience. She was also cross-trained in the neonatal intensive care unit and later, worked primarily on the antepartum floor there.



LAURIE HYDE
PHOTO BY TYBEE STUDIOS

With her rich nursing background in tow, Hyde eventually interviewed at Nurses for Newborns. After her initial interview with one of the founders, Sharon Rohrbach, nurse Hyde left the interview with an infant scale, a stethoscope and 12 referrals. For the last 28 years, she has been making in-home health care visits, loving families unconditionally and promoting positive parenting skills.

"I wear many hats when I enter a home, but first and foremost I'm a nurse," Hyde said. "I perform health care assessments, weighing, measuring and taking vital signs. I screen for growth and development and teach about home safety and nutrition."

Clients are varied but may include high-risk babies, intellectually and

developmentally disabled children, teenage mothers, families sometimes living with illness, drug abuse and almost always poverty. Hyde makes sure everyone is thriving, eating healthy and has enough food.

"I want to make a difference; one baby, one mom, one dad, one family at a time," Hyde said. "I think that's the greatest reward."

AT A GLANCE

NURSING PROGRAM:

St. Louis Community College-Meramec

AREA OF FOCUS:

Maternal and Child Health

YEARS OF SERVICE:

40 years

"I wear many hats when I enter a home, but first and foremost I'm a nurse."





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TOP BJC NURSES SHARE INSIGHTS ON EVOLVING CAREERS

SPONSORED CONTENT AND PHOTOS BY BJC HEALTHCARE

Nursing has always been a go-to career choice for those who want to help others and make a difference in the world.

With almost unlimited opportunities to advance, develop their skills and explore a range of experiences, nurses can have a long, satisfying career while making a difference. The key is taking advantage of opportunities and learning to evolve, say top BJC nurse and human resources leaders.

BJC HealthCare chief nursing executive Denise Murphy, Barnes-Jewish Hospital chief nurse executive Angelleen Peters-Lewis and BJC human resources talent strategies vice president Andrea Lampert shared their insights into evolving in a nursing career.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, NETWORKS AND COALITIONS

As an infection control nurse at Barnes Hospital in 1993, Denise Murphy was uncertain if anyone else at the hospital knew exactly what she did. Back then, preventing hospital-acquired infections was only beginning to be recognized as a priority.

Meanwhile, as Barnes merged with Jewish and Christian hospitals to form the BJC system, Murphy and Washington University infectious disease physician Victoria Fraser, MD, wondered if their work would get lost in the changing environment.

Working together, she and Dr. Fraser wrote a business case to convince the BJC board that an infection prevention program would reduce cost, as well as increase patient safety. Their work led the board to support and fund their efforts.

Banding together with specialists at other BJC hospitals, they formed the BJC Infection Prevention Consortium, an internationally known model for hospital infection control and patient safety. Dr. Fraser is now chair of the Washington University Department of Medicine, while Murphy serves as BJC's top nurse.

Murphy says building a coalition was key to the group's success. Forging relationships with experts whose strengths complement your own can maximize what you're able to accomplish, she says.

Andrea Lampert urges nurses to build relationships with nurses in their own or other specialties to learn about available opportunities. Not sure how to do that? Start in your workplace. BJC, for instance, sponsors "Connections" groups that allow employees to network on a personal and professional level.

THINK ABOUT WHAT FUELS YOUR PASSION

Lampert had earned two nursing degrees and was working as an oncology nurse when she became interested in how organizations operate. She then migrated into healthcare operations, including specialized services in staffing and recruiting, and ultimately was drawn to human resources.

Almost three years ago, she came full circle, joining BJC as vice president for talent strategies. Much of her job involves recruiting, retaining and developing the system's nursing staff. Her nursing background informs her decisions and lends them credibility, she says.

"It's exciting to be closer to the patient again. I view this role as the roof over the house of my career, supported by the pillars

of nursing, healthcare operations and human resources," she says.

It's important for nurses to think about what fuels them – what they're doing and where they're headed, Lampert says. Resources like BJC's online career-pathing tool for nurses can help them chart a career course that speaks to their passion and map their next steps.

Patient care is at the root of everything Angelleen Peters-Lewis does in her career, even as nurse executive.

Her drive to provide each patient with the best possible care led her to become a certified nurse practitioner in inpatient and outpatient settings from hospitals and clinics to a prison infirmary. She felt pulled toward improving community health and eliminating health care disparities.

By embracing leadership roles, she has been able to shape policies and empower other nurses, thereby magnifying her efforts. "Knowing that I can help create a culture that supports the best patient care is what gets me up in the morning," she says.

And almost every nurse can feel fueled by their career and should feel passionately about the area that they decide to contribute she says.

"Nursing provides such a diversity of things to get you passionate," Peters-Lewis says. "There are so many ways to contribute, so many ways to grow and evolve."



DENISE MURPHY



ANDREA LAMPERT



ANGELLEEN PETERS-LEWIS



BECCA JAMES

RN
Hope Hospice

BY NATALIE MACIAS, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When the body is perishing, Becca James nurses the soul.

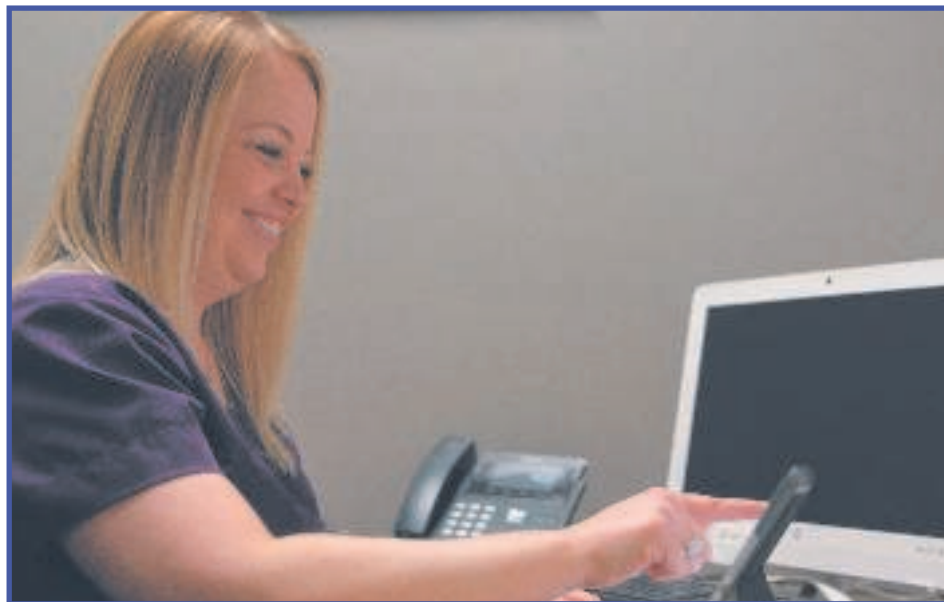
James was a young graphic artist doing some soul-searching of her own. At 24, she was considering a career change and was torn between teaching and nursing. “I realized there is so much teaching incorporated in nursing,” she said. “Nursing spoke to me the most. I was drawn to it.”

James, now director of clinical services at Hope Hospice, began her career as a case manager and was recently promoted to the director of clinical services. She is able to put both her passion for teaching and nursing to use in this position.

Hospice care nurses guide a patient through the end phase of life. They provide physical, emotional and psychosocial care for terminally ill patients. Hope Hospice also offers families support by providing services such as social work, spiritual guidance and continued bereavement support to guide them through their loss.

“Hospice is completely different than any other type of nursing,” James said. “Typically, nurses focus on curative treatments, and in hospice that is not the goal. The goal for myself and my team is to provide comfort.”

Comforting hospice patients can be as simple as talking, hand-holding, giving hugs and crying with them, James said.



BECCA JAMES
PHOTO BY TYBEE STUDIOS

“They need guidance but they also need reassurance. It’s important to make sure my patients feel comfortable with the unknown.”

Another key component in hospice is ensuring that patients have a dignified death and that all of their wishes are respected. In return, James and her team of nurses often form close bonds with patients and families along the way. “Our patients and their families tend to grab ahold of our hearts,” she said.

Although her management position doesn’t involve direct care, James is a team player, willing to fill in wherever she is needed – any hour of the day, no matter the task. Colleague Jamie Conrey explains, “She is always there

for the team and helps out whenever a fellow nurse needs it. She will go out and do home health aide visits as well as late night admissions. Even as she was promoted, she continues to do the same selfless acts as before.”

Nurse James’ encounters with life and death on a daily basis have given her a new perspective on her own life. She is frequently reminded that life is precious and the future is not promised.

“My job has made me think more about my own mortality. I take better care of myself and I also enjoy every moment. You never know when it could be your last day.”

AT A GLANCE

NURSING PROGRAM:
St. Charles Community College

AREA OF FOCUS:
Hospice

YEARS OF SERVICE:
8 years

“It’s important to make sure my patients feel comfortable with the unknown.”



SUSIE KILIAN

RN

Iveland Elementary School - Ritenour School District

BY NATALIE MACIAS, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Sporting silly glasses and wearing funny hats are the norm for Susie Kilian, school nurse at Iveland Elementary School. Her style is bubbly and approachable.

Working with kindergarten through fifth graders at an elementary school allows Nurse Susie (as her students call her) the opportunity to be creative with her care tactics. She uses these 'assessment tools' in order gauge the severity of student's symptoms. "If I put on a pair of funny glasses and can get them to smile or laugh, I know that they're fine."

Although her most frequent visits are from students complaining of upset stomachs and headaches, not all are illness-related, which led to the creation of her second unique idea – the 'payment system'. Upon leaving their visit, the student has the choice to give either a smile, hug or thank you. "I realized a lot of them just simply need hugs, but if you ask, they will often decline," she said. "So I thought, if I 'charged' them for visiting me, the student might end up with the hug they need."

For the record, nearly every student picks the hug.

Nurse Susie's warm and nurturing presence affects every person she comes in contact with, young and old. "She is absolutely amazing," said colleague Iris Elliot. "She has time, a smile and a heart for everyone in this building. Her demeanor has



SUSIE KILLIAN AND PATIENT
PHOTO BY TYBEE STUDIOS

the ability to bring even the shyest students out of their shell."

Nurse Susie leaves a profound impact on her students, many of them second-generation patients. Her very first kindergarteners are now 35 years old. "A lot of them have stayed in the area and I now have their children. I'll get out the yearbook and show photos of their moms and dads when they were in first or second grade."

It is even an ongoing joke at Iveland that students come up with excuses to pay Nurse Susie a visit because she is so wonderful to be around, Elliot said.

Apparently, these visits don't stop after elementary school. Upon

hearing of her recognition, a former student, now in college, brought in a poetry project about a person who had impacted his life. This person was Nurse Susie.

"When my kids come back and I realize that I've touched their lives like I did with this particular student, that's the best gift that I can receive at this job. I love being here."

AT A GLANCE

NURSING PROGRAM:

St. Louis Community College-
Florissant Valley

AREA OF FOCUS:

Pediatrics

YEARS OF SERVICE:

27 years

“When my kids come back and I realize that I’ve touched their lives...that’s the best gift that I can receive at this job.”



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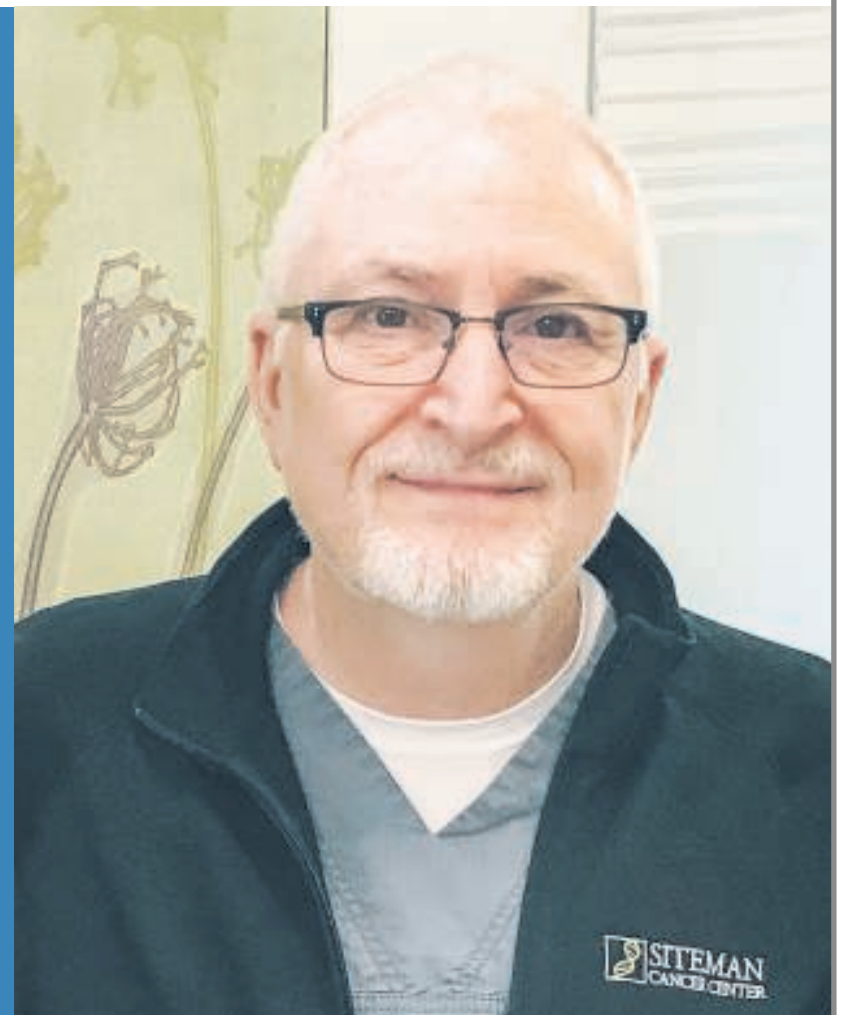
Major Bernard “Skip” Mann,
RN, BSN, USAFR, Ret.

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Skip Mann is being celebrated for the great impact he has made as a nursing professional. His more than 30 years of military service included serving as a U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman, U.S. Army Combat Medic and U.S. Air Force Flight Nurse in the Gulf War and in Afghanistan. Back at home, Skip has become well-known for his compassion and sense of humor,

working as a nurse at Siteman Cancer Center after previously caring for patients at other St. Louis facilities. He is active in the community, laying wreaths at Jefferson Barracks during the holidays and distributing coats to the homeless during the winter. Our deepest gratitude and appreciation to Skip for his commitment to our patients, to his team and to the community.



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BERNARD W. “SKIP” MANN

RN, BSN

Siteman Cancer Center - South County

BY SARAH GERREIN, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS

Twenty-seven years of taking and issuing orders in the military influenced Bernard W. “Skip” Mann, a Washington University oncology and infusion staff nurse at Siteman Cancer Center in South County.

Mann not only gained valuable medical experience during his time spent in various roles with the Navy and both the Army and Air Force Reserves, he also learned to be a direct communicator – a trait that serves him well with oncology patients. “Cancer patients are easy to connect with because they have resolved that the small stuff doesn’t matter. You can be very direct and open with these patients,” says Mann.

In oncology for 10-plus years, Mann recognizes that most of his patients have a limited amount of life left, so he makes the best of it. “I can’t cure cancer. What I can do, is for the 2-3 hours that I have somebody here, (or 6 or 7 hours), I can do the best that I can do. And I can make them smile, make them laugh or tell some corny jokes,” he says.

His supervisor, Kelly Sedlak, concurs: “Skip is like no other nurse I’ve ever met. Not only does he take great care of his patients, he connects with them on another level. I will never forget what he said during his interview, ‘I have been a nurse in the air, land and sea.’ I just thought that was the coolest! With all of his experiences and traveling the world, he can find something to talk to our patients about, and that really bonds him with them. He makes the patients forget they are sitting in the treatment chairs receiving chemotherapy and just for a few minutes can laugh and forget all of their worries.”

Mann was destined to be a helper at an early age. As a child, his own experiences helped him to connect and empathize with those in pain. His path to nursing



BERNARD W. “SKIP” MANN
PHOTO BY TYBEE STUDIOS

was not immediate, however. In the Navy he met a male nurse who planted the seed, but it took several years after leaving the Navy before he acted on it. Finally, with his purpose firmly in hand, Mann walked into the Federal Reserve Center and signed on with the civilian contract program through the Army Reserves. This assignment led directly to the formal start of his nursing career and the gaining of his LPN licensure.

After achieving his BSN degree, Mann was working at Cardinal Glennon Hospital when he learned from a member of a flying squadron at Scott Air Force Base that they were looking for flight nurses. Mann wasted no time signing up and was commissioned as an Air Force 2nd Lt. Following flight school, he was quickly deployed to Germany in support of Operation Desert Storm. He also served in Kosovo, Operation Enduring Freedom in Okinawa, Japan, the Pentagon 9/11 Rescue-Recovery, Afghanistan and Iraq.

He retired from the Air Force in 2005 as a Major and has been where he belongs – at the bedside of patients – ever since. Mann explains, “Every time I’ve tried to move into a management position, the farther away from a patient I get, the less I like it, the less I feel like a nurse. I want to be next to my patients.”

Hope is one of the most powerful remedies in the medical tool belt. Hope keeps Mann and his patients working on the future. He says, “Every oncology patient has been told by a doctor that they have a finite life left... Maybe we can beat it, and that ‘maybe’ means hope – and we are a very hopeful place.”

Hope is bolstered by real-life miracles and Mann has seen them – more than likely he was instrumental in creating them. “In this career, I have been involved in miracles. I have seen amazing things. It’s a perfect career. I never chose it – I believe that I was guided here.”

AT A GLANCE

NURSING PROGRAM:

St. Mary’s Hospital St. Louis
Maryville College

AREA OF FOCUS:

Oncology/Infusion

YEARS OF SERVICE:

36 years

“In this career, I have been involved in miracles. I have seen amazing things. It’s a perfect career. I never chose it — I believe that I was guided here.”



NIKKI MENICHINO

RN, BSN
St. Luke's Hospital

BY NATALIE MACIAS AND SARAH GERREIN, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS

To be a good nurse, clinical skills are crucial, but the ability to handle the emotional roller coaster is equally critical. Intensive care nurse Nikki Menichino, who works with some of the most critically ill patients at St. Luke's Hospital, handles the emotional aspect of her job with this mantra: "Always remember your 'why'."

Menichino was not yet a nurse when she realized her first 'why' sign during the birth of her daughter. "I still remember the nurse's face and name," she said. "I'll never forget the amazing care that she provided and I decided I wanted to provide that same care for someone else."

In the medical intensive care unit, Menichino treats patients with conditions such as sepsis, renal failure and respiratory failure. "I was drawn to the fact that in intensive care, the patients and families are 100 percent reliable on you. They are so vulnerable, and I wanted to be a light in their time of need," she said.

Her patients are often so critical that she is unable to communicate directly with them. As a result, she has a special task of forming relationships the patient's family. "It's so important to take time and ask the families questions about the patient," she said. "We treat them medically, but treating the whole patient is when you really develop a relationship with the families – then they can see that we aren't just here to do our job. We want to learn about who each patient is as a person."



NIKKI MENICHINO WITH PATIENT'S FAMILY MEMBER
PHOTO BY TYBEE STUDIOS

Menichino said that each patient has left a profound impact on her, but there is one that embodies her 'why.'

Stephanie Ingberg, an 18-year old high school senior at Parkway West, contracted E. coli in St. Louis prior to a trip to Punta Cana. Shortly after arriving in the Dominican Republic, her kidneys began to fail. She was flown back to the U.S. and admitted to the intensive care unit at St. Luke's. After a harrowing three weeks in the hospital, Ingberg made a miraculous recovery and is now a student at Mizzou.

Many nurses cared for Ingberg during her stay, but one nurse made the biggest impact. "After waking up from my coma, Nikki was one of the first people I remember," she said. "I woke

up confused, and her smile and overall positive energy always made me feel safe."

They formed such a special bond that Menichino thinks of Ingberg as a little sister and Ingberg sees Menichino as a mentor.

Ingberg is now pursuing a career in nursing and hopes to follow in Menichino's footsteps of caring for patients in the intensive care unit. "Nikki is so passionate about her job. She is a model for the type of nurse I aspire to be one day."

Just like that, Ingberg found her 'why.'

AT A GLANCE

NURSING PROGRAM:
University of Missouri–St. Louis

AREA OF FOCUS:
Critical Care

YEARS OF SERVICE:
3 years

“...we aren't just here to do our job. We want to learn about who each patient is as a person.”





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Thank you.

Thank you to the nurses of St. Luke's Hospital and St. Luke's Des Peres Hospital who touch countless lives and hearts in a way no one else can. We'd also like to congratulate St. Luke's Heart of Health Care Award recipient **Nikki Menichino, RN, BSN**, on being honored as a top caregiver in the community.

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DENISE SHINABERY

RN, BSN, CCRN
Mercy Hospital St. Louis

BY NATALIE MACIAS, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Denise Shinabery, clinical supervisor of Trauma-Neuro ICU and Medical-Surgical ICU at Mercy, St. Louis, was shocked by the recognition. No one else was.

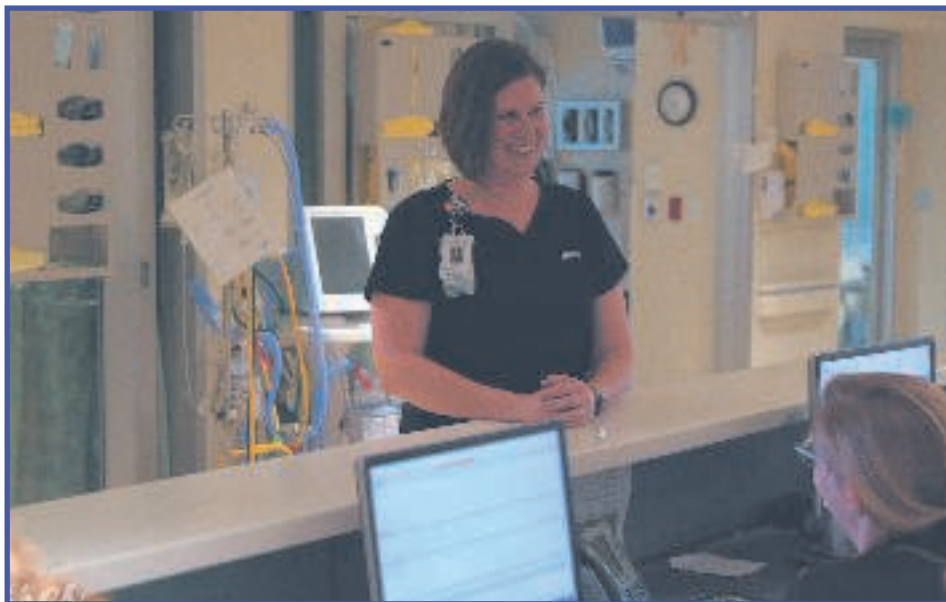
Coworkers described her as a supervisor who takes the role to a new level – managing patient and staff needs while still being an incredible bedside nurse. “By watching Denise in her role as supervisor, I hope to carry her calm and attentive characteristics into my own work practices,” explained colleague Susan Madden.

As an ICU nurse for the past 18 years, Shinabery cares for the most critical patients that enter the hospital at Mercy on a daily basis. “When I was in nursing school, I loved the critical care class I took and was pretty certain it is where I wanted to end up,” she said. “But I didn’t pass my nursing boards the first time...or the second time.”

She credits much of her success to both of these setbacks. “I asked myself, ‘So I failed my boards, what am I supposed to do next?’ I decided to work as a critical care tech so I wouldn’t lose my skills,” she said. This tech role not only kept her skills sharp but helped her gain hands-on, bedside experience.

She took her boards for the third time, passed – and has worked in critical care ever since.

The spectrum of patients in critical care varies every day – from postpartum complication patients to car crash victims. An ICU stay is a high-stress situation for patients as well as their families. “Nobody approaches their day thinking, ‘I’m going to be in the ICU today and it’s going to be great,’” she said. “We as ICU nurses have to



DENISE SHINABERY
PHOTO BY TYBEE STUDIOS

make their stay as positive as we can. We don’t just take care of patients, we comfort their families as well. That’s our job.”

Shinabery remembers a specific instance where she cared for an elderly cancer patient who was having a difficult time communicating her decision to discontinue treatment to family members. “I sat with her family to explain her wishes, comforted them and was ultimately able to make that process easier for the patient,” she said.

It’s moments like these that reaffirm Shinabery’s purpose.

As a clinical supervisor, Shinabery’s role involves guiding her fellow ICU nurses on a daily basis. Her philosophy in leadership is to practice what she preaches. “If I go in and expect my nurses to do something, I better be doing the same thing,” she said. “If I

institute a new policy, I need to back that up. I also make sure and support them as much as possible. Whether that means letting them take a break or just recognizing that they’re having a bad day, I make sure they know I’m there to help.”

You would be hard-pressed to find a coworker that disagrees.

Shinabery regularly shares her multiple board failures with nursing students as a testament that the path to success isn’t always linear. What comes in between can solidify your purpose and build character along the way.

“I love nursing and I wouldn’t want to be doing anything else. It is the best job ever,” she said.

AT A GLANCE

NURSING PROGRAM:
Harding University

AREA OF FOCUS:
Critical Care

YEARS OF SERVICE:
18 years

“We don’t just take care of patients, we comfort their families as well. That’s our job.”



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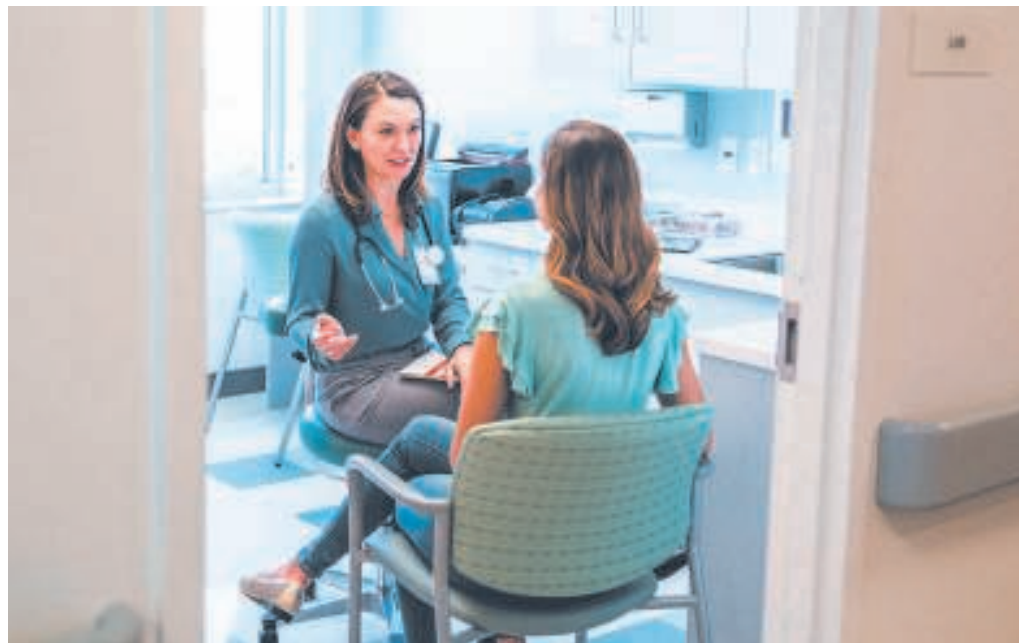
The skill and talent of over 47,000 employees helps Centene provide high-quality health care solutions to more than 14 million managed-care members and beneficiaries in 32 states, and 600,000 individuals internationally. In St. Louis, more than 5,000 employees, including clinical and nursing professionals, support operations at Centene's global headquarters, while another team of Centene employees works directly with Missouri health plan membership through our local subsidiary, Home State Health.

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As the national leader in managed long-term services and support, Centene health plans like Home State work directly with the most vulnerable members: those with developmental, physical and/or complex health conditions. Nursing staff help identify health risks while enhancing member independence, quality of life and community engagement.

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Source: Centene Annual Report and Centene.com

SUZANNE WARD

RN, BSN

Eureka High School - Rockwood School District

BY JENNIFER L. MASON, BRAND AVE. STUDIOS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Suzanne Ward can remember being in middle school when she visited her grandma's house. This particular visit left an imprint on Ward as her grandma was recovering from lung cancer.

"I was taking care of her, visiting, playing cards ... doing whatever I could for her," said Ward, now a school nurse at Eureka High School. "I remember my grandma telling me that I took such good care of her, and she thought I would be a nurse one day."

Ward dabbled in various fields before becoming an elementary school nurse at Geggie Elementary. She worked at Jewish Hospital in the medical and coronary intensive care unit (ICU). Following her five years in the ICU, Ward moved into the pulmonary division at Washington University School of Medicine and worked alongside three physicians. As her children became older and were attending school, Ward found she was frequently subbing as a nurse and realized it was a great job for a mom.

Ward was subbing in different buildings throughout the Rockwood District, and she desired her 'own building' – considering it a bonus if she could be a nurse where her children would attend school.

"I take care of somebody else's child the way I would want somebody to care for mine," Ward said. "I always remind myself this is someone else's 'baby' and they deserve the best. So, that's how I take care of 'my kids' when they come to the office needing my services."

She transferred to Eureka High School last fall where she provides care for



SUZANNE WARD AND PATIENT
PHOTO BY TYBEE STUDIOS

more than 80 students each day; the highest average student ratio per day in the district.

"I was very comfortable with the little kids, but I love the older kids, too," she said. "The teenagers are great. They talk to you, carry on meaningful conversations, and I am able to build a rapport with them."

Nurse Ward is driven by her ethics, passion and positivity. Thirty-one years into her career, she finds working with students rewarding and enjoys the challenge of providing the best care possible.

She not only goes the extra mile with students but with faculty, too.

"The other day I cut the back of my head shaving, and I was still bleeding," said Charles Crouther, principal of

Eureka High School. "I visited the nurse's office expecting a tissue and a Band-Aid – hardly. Nurse Ward went the whole nine yards. She made me sit down while she put on gloves and broke out everything official to clean me up. She is an excellent and caring nurse who goes the extra mile. We are thrilled to have her at Eureka."

When asked what her magic formula was, it was no surprise to hear Ward say she is simply being herself. She considers it a two-way street. The students embrace Ward in the hallways, seeking out a relationship.

"Those relationships are built and bonded with the trust and care I show for them," she said. "They know I have their back. They know they are important to me. I'm just being myself."

AT A GLANCE

NURSING PROGRAM:

Missouri Baptist School of Nursing
Webster University

AREA OF FOCUS:


School Nursing

YEARS OF SERVICE:

31 years

“I take care of somebody else's child the way I would want somebody to take care for mine.”





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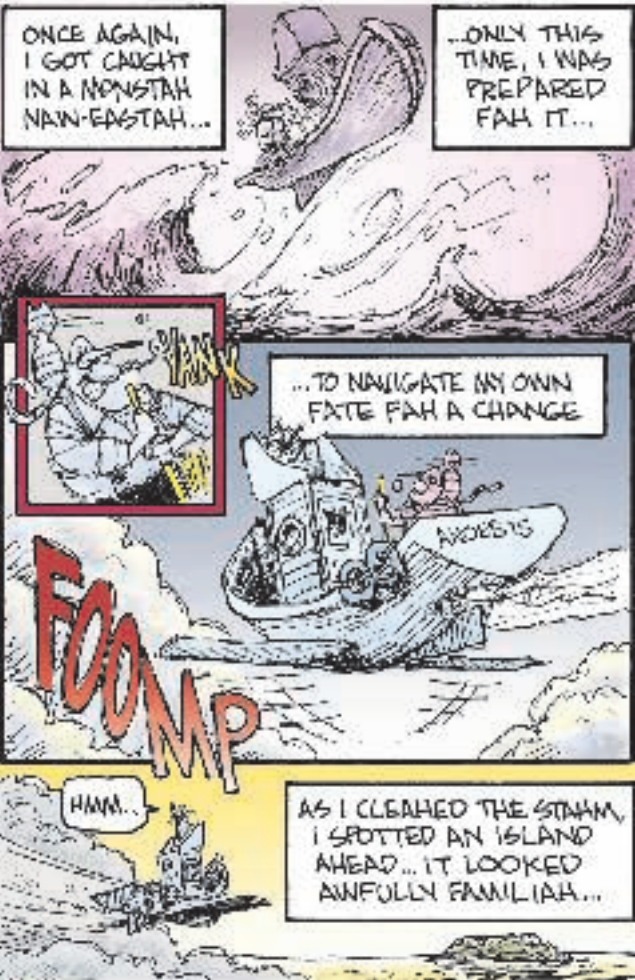
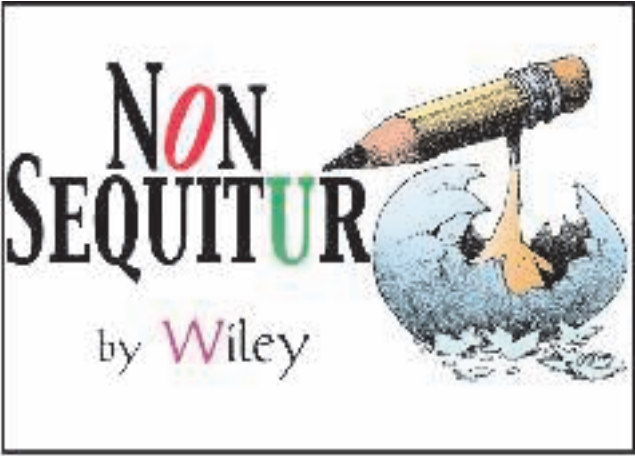
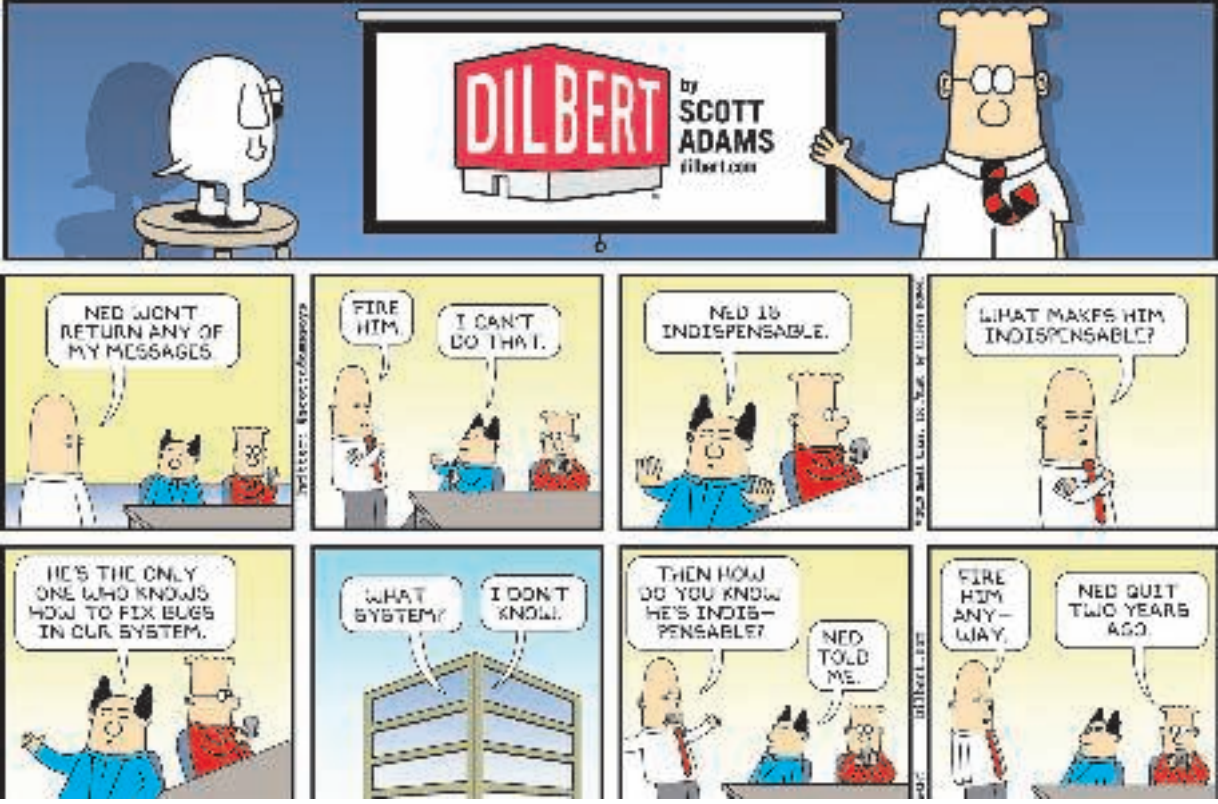
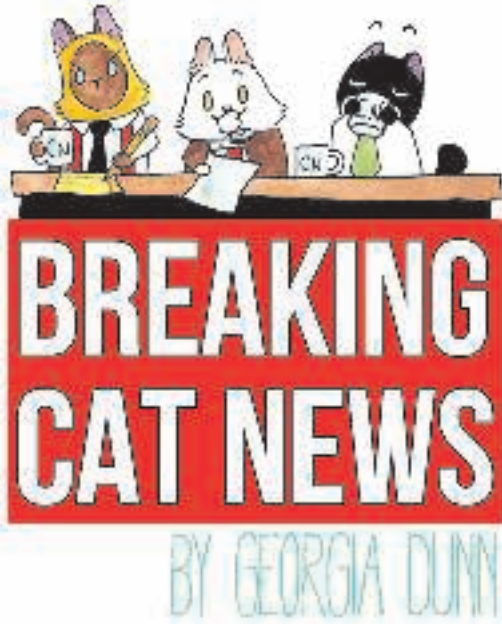
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