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The Heart of Health Care

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

MAY 6-MAY 12, 2020

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# A SALUTE TO NURSES

By CHARITY DEWING  
cdewing@billingsgazette.com

**N**ow, more than ever, healthcare workers deserve recognition and praise for what they do on a daily basis. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, they have been deemed the frontline warriors against the coronavirus disease, risking their own health and time with their families – in some cases having to temporarily live apart from their spouses and children to keep their loved ones safe.

In Yellowstone County, and our region, our nurses work tirelessly to care for the individuals whom seek their expertise and assistance. The community has noticed and with the rest of the nation, openly found ways to express appreciation. From lawns decorated with signs thanking nurses for all they do, to local movements calling for residents to howl loudly every evening as a thank you to healthcare staff, there is an enormous sense of gratitude.

“People are heroes all the time and not recognized,” said Tori Taylor, Registered Nurse at Billings Clinic. “It is nice to be acknowledged for the work you do.”

That is the intention of this publication. For the second year in a row, the Billings Gazette and our sponsors want to honor these often unsung heroes for their bravery, devotion and determination. Ten nurses, nominated out of hundreds, were selected for their outstanding practice and quality care.

“Nursing is a hard, expanding calling,” said Taylor. “It’s like becoming a parent – I am a better person from becoming a nurse.”

Through the ever-growing challenges, nurses do not simply go to work. In fact, it seems an innate characteristic to love their job – and quality care is the telling sign of that adoration.

They are saving lives, bridging gaps, and lending emotional support – taking care of not only patients, but fellow staff.

“There are so many ways nurses can help people – but the bottom line and most important part is, we love our patients.”

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COMMUNICATIONS

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# Nurses

## The Heart of Health Care

During times of crisis, of convention and of rapid change, we are proud of our nurses for being at the heart of health care. Serving as a member of a team providing medically necessary care is perhaps the least challenging part of all that nurses do. Serving as an advocate, a leader, a sense of calm and a promoter of hope are arguably be some of the most challenging roles a nurse takes on.

As an advocate, the nurse stands for all that is in the best interest of the patient and family. Learning what the patient and family determine and striving to answer any questions that arise are the most important goals. Helping to guide decisions in an unbiased manner and challenging other members of the team to do what is best for them takes incredible courage and integrity.

As a leader, the nurse helps to guide the care of the patient by serving as the anchor for the team. Usually the first to note changes in patient condition, the nurse is often the eyes and ears of the physician or advanced practice provider. Helping to lead other team members to the full extent of their abilities and utilizing the extraordinary skill sets of other colleagues; CNAs, techs, and many others is a critical nursing duty. They acknowledge housekeeping, transport and other ancillary resources while ensuring that they are fully recognized as critical teammates that keep our patients safe.

As a sense of calm, the nurse sets the tone for not only the team, but for our patients and families. They help to navigate difficult physical and emotional encounters by remaining calm for the sake of others, even though inside, they may be weeping or fearful.

As a promoter of hope, the nurse helps the team, patients, and families to thrive by balancing reality with a focus on gratitude. Even in the most challenging of times, gratitude can be found. Gratitude can bring hope and healing, often in unexpected ways.

Caring for others is fundamental to what the nurse "does." Caring for others, often at the expense of themselves, is done without hesitation. These selfless acts of kindness and compassion are the epitome of giving.

Many of the greatest contributions that nurses make are not tangible. We thank you for all that you do: for changing lives, for leading, for instilling hope.



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# MEET THIS YEAR'S HONOREES

## CRYSTAL BOUCHARD

### BSN, RNC-OB BILLINGS CLINIC

By Jennifer L. Mason, Brand Ave. Studios Contributing Writer

**A** nurturer at heart, Crystal Bouchard knew at an early age two things: she wanted to be a mom and a nurse. She never wondered what she would do after growing up.

"I feel like I was put on this earth to care for others," Bouchard said. "I think I've always known it was my calling."

Bouchard didn't waste any time. She began her nursing career in high school as a certified nursing assistant (CNA). Upon graduating, she continued working as a CNA while working towards her licensed practical nurse (LPN) degree. After earning her LPN she worked in internal medicine for some time and decided to start a family.

"At this point in my life, it was time to begin fulfilling my second dream of starting a family," Bouchard said. "After a few years of having the opportunity to stay home with my three boys, it was time to finish my ultimate goal of becoming a registered nurse (RN)."

Bouchard enjoyed each one of her nursing jobs and missed being a nurse. She jumped back in without missing a beat and went on to make her goal a reality by becoming a registered nurse, followed by earning a Bachelor of Science in nursing from Montana State University-Billings.

To date, she has been practicing as an RN for nearly three years, all of those at the Family Birth Center at Billings Clinic as a labor and delivery nurse. The Family Birth Center is a labor, delivery, recovery, and postpartum (LDRP) model, allowing the mother and family to stay in a single suite throughout the entire birthing process.

"The labor and delivery department is where I'm supposed to be," Bouchard said. "I hope to work here for the rest of my nursing career."

A 2019 recipient of The DAISY Award, she said it's an honor to help bring new life into the world. She enjoys making connections with her patients and knowing she's made a positive impact on one of the biggest days of their lives.

"Crystal is the kind of person everyone wants to have as their nurse," said Angela Lile, BSN, RN, CNML, nurse manager at Billings Clinic. "She relates to every patient and family member in a calm and personal way. Crystal knows what you need before you do. She is dearly loved by all who come into contact with her."



MIKE CLARK, Billings Gazette

“ I feel like I was put on this earth to care for others. I think I’ve always known it was my calling. ”



# WORKING NIGHTS

## another challenge for nurses

### Green SHOOT MEDIA

While the responsibilities of nurses don't change when the sun goes down, the atmosphere can be a shock for those new to the profession.

Not only will the types of emergencies you face be different, but adjusting to a new schedule and lifestyle can be challenging.

Whether you're a new nurse or a veteran who is adjusting to the night shift, consider these tips from Every Nurse to succeed.

### Adjust your sleeping schedule

One of the biggest routine changes for night shift is learning how to sleep throughout the day. Ensuring that you get enough rest is crucial for your work performance and overall health.

The National Sleep Foundation encourages night-shift nurses to stick to the same bedtime and wake-up schedule, even on the weekends.

If you find it difficult to adjust to sleep-

ing during the day, here are some helpful tips from the foundation:

- Avoid consuming alcohol or caffeinated beverages close to bedtime.
- Invest in a sleep mask and earplugs to eliminate lights and sounds.
- Use light-blocking window coverings to block the sun from entering your bedroom.

### Eat healthy meals

Consuming the right foods before your shift can have a significant impact on your energy and stamina levels. Experts say that grazing rather than ingesting large meals throughout the workday can also help you during a night shift.

Pack light meals like raw salads, fruits, nuts and vegetables to create a well-balanced diet. Add these items to your weekly shopping and menu list:

- Gluten-free breads.
- Hard candy and granola bars.
- Dried fruits.



ADOBE STOCK VIA  
GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

- Fruit juice and bottled water.

Try to keep your snacks in areas that you frequent throughout the shift to give yourself a quick burst of energy while avoiding caffeine and foods that are high in sugar.

### Monitor your own health

The NSF also suggests that night

shift workers face a higher risk of experiencing insomnia, daytime sleepiness, high blood pressure and diabetes.

If you feel like your health is declining while on the job, it's crucial to seek medical assistance.

You should also experiment with sleeping patterns and exercise to find the best method to feel refreshed.



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# MEET THIS YEAR'S HONOREES

## BOBBIE BROWNE

### LPN BILLINGS CLINIC

By Jennifer L. Mason, Brand Ave. Studios Contributing Writer

At the age of 14, Bobbie Browne was already immersed in the medical field as a certified nursing assistant. She worked at a local nursing home through high school and upon graduating, worked at a hospital while she earned her licensed practical nurse degree.

She decided on the field of neurology as it sounded interesting and provided the opportunity to work with patients who have a variety of inherited and acquired conditions. Browne helps patients manage and recover from their conditions while helping them improve their physical, behavioral and cognitive abilities.

"Bobbie is an advocate for her patients, most of whom have very complicated medical histories," said Rita Bishop, neurology department manager at Billings Clinic.

Browne has been working in neurology at Billings Clinic since 2001 and currently works in the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Center. The impact of MS is wide-ranging and complex. Neurology care requires a high level of communication, interpersonal skills, stamina, patience and a detail-oriented mindset.

"We have chronically ill patients at the MS center," Browne said. "However, I consider it a privilege to sit with the patients, learn their stories and walk with them throughout their disease."

Known for remembering every detail of a patient's diagnosis and treatment, she is knowledgeable and resourceful. From the provider to the patient, she goes above and beyond to provide detailed care for her patients.

"I consider myself a go-to person," Browne said. "If someone has questions or if they have an issue they can't figure out, they will come to me because they know I either know the answer or I will take the time to help them figure it out."

"Bobbie truly cares about her patients and puts in countless hours making sure their needs are met," said Angie Branson, RN, clinical coordinator at Billings Clinic. "She takes it upon herself to stay up to speed on the latest medications and treatments for their conditions."

Making a point to smile as much as she can, Browne believes a positive attitude is infectious. She says nothing is worse when someone comes to work upset or cranky as it can be powerful enough to bring everyone down.

"Bobbie's positive attitude and willingness to try new ways of doing things make her an anchor for the neurology department," Branson said. "Her personality is calm and professional, earning her the respect of physicians, providers, patients, managers and her peers."



MIKE CLARK, Billings Gazette

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# MEET THIS YEAR'S HONOREES

## ANGIE STAI DUNN

**CNA, CMA  
ST. JOHN'S UNITED**

**By Jennifer L. Mason, Brand Ave. Studios Contributing Writer**

Seniors have the best stories. Many have traveled the world, held various jobs, raised families and even fought in wars. Angie Stai Dunn was raised by them. “I love the elderly and feel very comfortable with them,” Dunn said.

She took her passion for seniors and started a career in assisted living. Dunn remembers working as a housekeeper and having the desire to help feed residents during mealtime.

“At some point, they were also babies, children and teenagers - just like us,” Dunn said. “I felt like it was my calling to work with seniors; I love them for who they are and what they share.”

Dunn spends her time as a certified medical assistant at St. John's United - Chapel Court Assisted Living. She looks for the residents each day and in turn, they look for her. She takes the extra time to listen, to be present and to provide some type of happiness in hopes of lifting their spirits.

She embodies the mission statement of St. John's United ‘to provide living opportunities within nurturing environments of hope, dignity and love.’

“Angie is programmed to go above and beyond,” said Tennyson Gabel, assisted living director at St. John's United. “Her caring demeanor and kind heart are evident daily as she interacts with residents and her coworkers.”

Many seniors look forward to their interactions with the staff. A friendly face or conversation could mean the difference between a tough day and a good day. Caregivers like Dunn aim to make her residents happy each day and in turn, it leaves her feeling fulfilled.

“I take my time with each resident,” Dunn said. “Nobody wants to be rushed or feel like they are inconveniencing you. I know they appreciate my company and enjoy a good conversation.”

Over the years, Dunn has become an invaluable asset to the St. John's community. She pours her heart and soul into her work and to others. There is never any doubt on whether or not the resident's needs have been met if you have Dunn on your shift.



CASEY PAGE Billings Gazette

“ I take my time with each resident. Nobody wants to be rushed or feel like they are inconveniencing you. I know they appreciate my company and enjoy a good conversation. ”





ADOBE STOCK VIA GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

# Technology continues to change care for patients

## Green SHOOT MEDIA

To assist nurses in making their jobs easier and improve the experiences of those under care, cutting-edge technology is consistently providing upgrades.

Recently, LinkedIn surveyed more than 600 nursing professionals and the majority said they have a somewhat or very positive view of how technology is affecting patient care.

Check out some of the most cutting-edge tools that nurses can take advantage of, as reported by Western Governors University.

### Automated IV pumps

The specialty tools are effective to control dosages and drips provided to patients. They reduce human error by electronically adjusting to a person's need for medication.

Automated pumps are also responsible for automatically dispensing important nutritional content at scheduled times and allow patients to increase a controlled amount of pain medication by themselves.

One of the most significant advantages of these electric pumps is that nurses have more time to focus on other areas of their work rather than measuring and giving medication.

### Smart beds

Connected beds are useful to track a

patient's movement behaviors and regularly update the nursing staff. Smart bed technology can help medical professionals discover patterns in physical activity, which can often lead to a new diagnosis or understanding of a condition.

They also limit the need for nurses to attend to adjustments that make patients more comfortable as users can typically make adjustments on their own.

### Telehealth

Telehealth is a relatively new technology found in hospitals and clinics. Rather than visiting a facility for minor issues, patients can communicate with their nurses via video chat. It's a valuable tool to keep contagious people away from the public and receive medical advice remotely.

Video communication is also valuable to describe your symptoms or show medical professionals issues like rashes or bumps.

Of course, if an expert feels that the problem is severe, they will suggest that you visit their clinic in person. However, in some cases, they may resolve that the issue is manageable and call in a prescription.

Mental health assistance is also included in telehealth communication. Patients can speak to counselors or nurses online from a comfortable environment like their home or office.



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IN THIS TOGETHER.





# MEET THIS YEAR'S HONOREES

## ANGELA HIGGINS

### BSN, RNC-NIC BILLINGS CLINIC

By Jennifer L. Mason, Brand Ave. Studios Contributing Writer

She didn't know it at the time, but there was always a bigger plan in sight. Angela Higgins knew early on her true calling was to be a nurse. Her mom was a nurse and her grandma had enrolled in nursing school but ended up staying home to be a farmer's wife.

"I always had a desire to teach others and take care of people and realized nursing had that type of opportunity," Higgins said. "I believe it was middle school when I made up my mind that I wanted to become a nurse."

She began her long tenure at Billings Clinic as an adult intensive care unit (ICU) nurse. After a couple of years, Higgins had a premature baby which gave her the initiative to switch from caring for adults to caring for babies in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

"I have always been an adrenaline junkie, so I thrive on taking care of really sick patients. I love the feeling of a rush; it's always been my thing," Higgins said. "Having a preemie of my own was an eye-opening experience. Today, my son is a high school senior, and after having him, I switched to the NICU to care for babies."

Billings Clinic offers a state-of-the-art Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for babies requiring comprehensive care, monitoring, and intensive medical attention. The Clinic also has emergency transport flights for pregnant women or newborns. Higgins is on the neonatal flight team which requires additional training and certifications.

"I find even more adrenaline when I'm in the sky helping a flying ICU," Higgins said. "We will either bring babies into our NICU or sometimes we take sick babies who need advanced surgery and fly them to Denver or Salt Lake City."

Higgins believes there's always an opportunity to learn, grow and succeed. She has already applied for and hopes to begin her studies this fall as a neonatal nurse practitioner, ultimately earning a doctor of nursing practice degree.

"You can never stop learning," she said. "The moment you become too comfortable and think you know it all, you're probably in trouble."

Higgins, known as the glass is always half full type of person, admits she sees the world through rose-colored glasses. She can bring calm to any situation no matter the intensity.

"I'm always the calm one who brings laughter to an intense situation," Higgins said. "It's good for people to be able to laugh and then reset their minds. Being empathetic and realizing that everyone is in it together is key. It's easy for me to relate because I had a preemie."



CASEY PAGE Billings Gazette

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# MEET THIS YEAR'S HONOREES

## REBECCA LEE

**BSN, RN, CPEN, TNCC,  
PALS, ACLS, SANE  
ST. VINCENT HEALTHCARE**

**By Jennifer L. Mason, Brand Ave. Studios Contributing Writer**

A seventh-grade career aptitude test planted the seed for Rebecca Lee to become a nurse. At the time, Lee laughed it off and told herself it would never happen. Years later she started working as an emergency room technician at St. Vincent Healthcare.

"As an ER tech, I remember admiring the nurses caring behavior," Lee said. "After serving on a mission trip in Ethiopia and witnessing the enormous need for health care across the world - it just hit me. I knew at that moment I wanted to be a nurse, not only in my backyard but across the world."

Indeed, that's exactly what she did. She continued to work as a tech while attending nursing school. It was an easy transition for Lee.

"As a nursing intern, my coworkers already knew me," Lee said. "Everyone was so invested in me becoming a nurse. St. Vincent's has the best people."

Ten years as an ER tech and two years into her nursing career, all spent at St. Vincent, Lee stresses the importance of not getting caught up in ourselves or other menial things.

"You have to remember it's not about you," Lee said. "You can bring encouragement and positivity to people regardless of their position or title."

Lee has a servant's heart in the ER and across the world as she continually serves on mission trips. She is genuinely interested in helping others without expecting anything in return. She has an uncanny ability to observe her surroundings while listening to her intuition, using her resources and showing compassion.

"Rebecca is a true hero in every sense of the word," said Samantha Kaufman, BSN, CEN, CFRN, EMT-P, director of emergency services at St. Vincent Healthcare. "She is consistently adapting to the ever-changing environment of the emergency department while maintaining the physical and mental endurance to provide excellent care. Rebecca has earned a high level of respect among her peers, patients and their families ... she is a rock star."



MIKE CLARK, Billings Gazette

“ You have to remember it's not about you. You can bring encouragement and positivity to people regardless of their position or title. ”



# MEET THIS YEAR'S HONOREES

## STACY PARKER

### BSN, RN, ONC ST. VINCENT HEALTHCARE

By Jennifer L. Mason, Brand Ave. Studios Contributing Writer

As a little girl, Stacy Parker dreamed of becoming a doctor. After growing up, she quickly changed her tune and decided that attending school for several years was not her cup of tea.

"I'm so glad I chose to become a nurse," Parker said. "I love how much I'm able to interact with the patients. I'm essentially the eyes and ears for the doctors."

A 2019 recipient of The DAISY Award, she takes pride in positively impacting the lives of her patients and family members. Parker said she treats each patient as if they are a family member. "Thinking of my patients as a family member keeps the situation real and grounded. I'm able to sympathize and connect on a deeper level."

"Stacy is the type of nurse you want at your bedside taking care of you or your loved ones," said Danielle Braun, BSN, RN, ONC, orthopedics nurse manager at St. Vincent Healthcare. "She advocates for her patients to ensure they receive the best care possible and always goes above and beyond."

Parker began her nursing career as a licensed practical nurse working in a nursing home. After becoming a registered nurse, she began her employment at St. Vincent on a transitional care floor unit. Almost a year later, Parker had the opportunity to become a float nurse in orthopedics.

"I remember the manager at the time telling me I needed to work in orthopedics permanently," she said. "So, I applied to move to orthopedics and never left."

One reason she never left orthopedics is the fact that most patients get to go home. The orthopedic floor at St. Vincent primarily sees two types of patients: elective surgery patients or trauma patients.

"I like when people can go home - it's better than the alternative," Parker said. "For the most part, broken bones eventually heal regardless of it being elective or trauma, which makes it a positive outcome floor."

She sees her patients perhaps at their worst times, but also helps them through the healing process. Parker is determined to find common ground to relate to her patients.

"When I first met Stacy, I was in awe of the care and compassion she provided to her patients," said Amanda Kozik, RN, orthopedics clinical supervisor at St. Vincent Healthcare. "Watching her attentiveness to patients and even how she responds to emergencies with such ease, inspires me to be a better nurse."



CASEY PAGE, Billings Gazette

“ I’m so glad I chose to become a nurse. I love how much I’m able to interact with the patients. I’m essentially the eyes and ears for the doctors. ”



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# MEET THIS YEAR'S HONOREES

## KAYCEE PARKS

**BSN, RN, CPN  
ST. VINCENT HEALTHCARE**

**By Jennifer L. Mason, Brand Ave. Studios Contributing Writer**

**K**aycee Parks has a deep passion for kids and wants more than anything to make their day a little bit easier. She is determined to create a sense of normalcy for her patients since more often than not, they are experiencing one of their worst days.

"I love kids," Parks said. "They have a soft spot in my heart. There's nothing better than when I'm able to sit down with my patients and have a special time with them such as paint their fingernails or take them outside in the sunshine. Being in the hospital for a young person can be scary and overwhelming. When I connect with my patients and see them smile it becomes my 'why' for nursing."

"Kaycee takes the time to learn about her patients," said Amber Pisk, BAN, RN-BC, CPN, pediatric nurse manager at St. Vincent Healthcare. "She asks about their families, pets, favorite comfort items, TV shows and teachers, etc., and keeps these in mind as she cares for each patient."

Parks was fortunate enough to graduate from college and immediately start working as a registered nurse at St. Vincent. However, she said her nursing career technically began early on.

"Ever since I was a little girl, I've always known I wanted to be a nurse," Parks said. "I was the little girl who would carry around her baby dolls. If I would drop them on the floor or accidentally knock their heads against the counter, I would start crying because I was so worried they were hurt, and I needed to fix them."

Fast forward to today, and that same care and compassion has continued throughout her career. Parks thrives on being a difference-maker. She considers it an honor when a family comes back to visit the pediatric unit months or years later and tells her what an impact she had on their life.

"The opportunity to be a small part of a child's journey is a great feeling," Parks said. "Whether it's celebrating with the families when their child comes off the ventilator or when a teenager takes their first step after a traumatic brain injury - they are all genuine opportunities to make a positive impact on someone's life."

"Kaycee has a way about her that exudes comfort," Pisk said. "She listens intently, anticipates needs and develops trusting relationships within minutes of meeting someone. Kaycee cares about every child she meets, not only as a patient but as a unique personality who deserves the best-individualized care."



MIKE CLARK, Billings Gazette

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# 2020 DECLARED YEAR OF THE NURSE

ADOBE STOCK  
VIA GREEN  
SHOOT  
MEDIA

## Green SHOOT MEDIA

In honor of the 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, the World Health Organization declared 2020 as the year of the nurse.

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the health care field will add 3,059,800 new registered nursing jobs between 2018 and 2028, a growth rate of 12%.

In support of nurses, WHO suggests the "Triple Impact" to give these professionals the tools they need to excel in patient care: better health, stronger economies and greater gender equality.

With these tools, nursing experts are given the opportunity to receive a formal education, enroll in training programs and enter a career that stimulates the economy and health care field.

## Who was Florence Nightingale?

Florence Nightingale is widely known as the founder of modern nursing. During the Crimean War, she oversaw providing care for the British and allied soldiers in Turkey. Sometimes called, "The Lady with the Lamp," Nightingale would go on to found the first scientifically based nursing school in London in 1860.

She was also responsible for instituting training for midwives and nurses who

practiced in workhouse infirmaries. Her work continues to inspire medical professionals today and led to her birthday, May 12, being designated to commemorate International Nursing Day each year.

## Thank a nurse!

National Nurses Week is May 6-17.

## Reports and campaigns

As part of the 2020 celebration for nurses, WHO will release its first State of the World's Nursing Report. The document will describe how the nursing workforce can help deliver Universal Health Coverage and Sustainable Development Goals.

It will also highlight new areas for policy growth over the next three to five years.

2020 will be the final year for the Nursing Now campaign that was started in 2018. The movement focused on five areas:

- A more prominent voice in health policy making.
- Greater investments in the nursing workforce.
- Recruiting more nurses in leadership roles.
- Conducting research to find where nurses can have the most impact.
- Share of the best nursing practices.

You can help spread the message by sharing the Nursing Now campaign across social media, hosting local events or advocating for the nurses in your community.



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# MEET THIS YEAR'S HONOREES

## BROCADE STOPS BLACK EAGLE

**BSN, RN  
IHS – CROW/NORTHERN  
CHEYENNE HOSPITAL**

**By Jennifer L. Mason, Brand Ave. Studios Contributing Writer**

Located sixty miles southeast of Billings is Crow Agency, Montana - also known as Crow Country. Situated there you'll find Crow/Northern Cheyenne Hospital, an Indian Health Service agency. Nurse Brocade Stops Black Eagle works at the hospital in the clinic outpatient department as their maternal child care coordinator.

"I was born and raised on a Crow Indian Reservation so, relating to my patients hits home for me," said Brocade.

The hospital works in partnership with its patients they serve to elevate their physical, mental, social and spiritual health to the highest level. Brocade considers women's health and prenatal care a top priority for her community.

"Her intuition is like no other," said Lt. Cmdr. Sandra L. Olson, MSN, RN, clinical nurse supervisor at IHS – Crow/Northern Cheyenne Hospital. "She can seamlessly create projects to intertwine her role within the community."

As the maternal child care coordinator, she receives a notification when a positive pregnancy test comes from within Crow/Northern Cheyenne or the outlying areas. Brocade reaches out to the women, inquiring if they need an appointment at the clinic to start their prenatal care, or she encourages them to set up an appointment elsewhere.

"When they make their prenatal appointment, it's an opportunity for me to zone in on them," said Brocade. "Besides providing prenatal education, I ask them basic questions about their environment, health history and see what else I can do for them during their pregnancy."

Brocade loves her patients. She enjoys interacting with them which includes laughing, sharing stories and crying. In addition to being the maternal child care coordinator, she also keeps track of Pap smears and mammograms for women in the community. She makes sure the women are making their appointments or receiving necessary referrals.

"I truly care about my patients, and they trust me," Brocade said. "I try to live a healthy and positive lifestyle and encourage others to go out and do the same."

Driven, hardworking and always finishes what she starts, Brocade has a zest for life and the essential quality of perseverance.

"Brocade has a warm rapport, builds relationships with ease and thinks of creative alternatives when confronted with obstacles," Olson said.



MIKE CLARK, Billings Gazette

“ I truly care about my patients, and they trust me. I try to live a healthy and positive lifestyle and encourage others to go out and do the same.” ”



# MEET THIS YEAR'S HONOREES

## KAYLA VOWELL

### BSN, RN ST. VINCENT HEALTHCARE

By Jennifer L. Mason, Brand Ave. Studios Contributing Writer

Last year, Kayla Vowell graduated from nursing school, received her license and started her first job as a registered nurse at St. Vincent. It was a different path from where she began. With her experience as a massage therapist, Vowell entered college pursuing a business degree with the hopes of one day owning a spa.

"I had a friend who was deciding between two career paths and nursing was one of them," Vowell said. "I can remember trying to convince her on why she should pick nursing. As I listened to myself, it dawned on me I should follow my advice."

Months following submitting her nursing application, she wasn't sure which area she may enjoy working in. However, when she fractured her ankle and became a patient on the orthopedic floor where she works today, she said it propelled her to focus on orthopedics.

And, focus she did. Last year, Vowell was maybe three months into her new career as a registered nurse when she became the recipient of The DAISY Award, a recognition program honoring nurses.

"Receiving an award like this so early in my career is a true honor," Vowell said. "From not knowing if this was the right career for me and then receiving The DAISY Award was an affirmation this is where I belong."

Vowell loves being presented with new challenges. She said with nursing, every day is different. The orthopedic floor at St. Vincent provides care for bone and joint problems including replacements and also treats complex trauma injuries.

"We have patients who are on one side of the floor for elective surgeries like hips and knees," Vowell said. "Those patients want to be there. The other side of our floor is for orthopedic traumas such as a motor vehicle accident. Those patients do not want to be there."

Vowell enjoys being a difference-maker and looks forward to meeting new patients and families. She also tries anticipating their needs and being present for each patient. After all, she's been there as an orthopedic patient and can empathize.

"Nursing, in general, is a science and an art," Vowell said. "For me, having a positive attitude and a cheerful heart is important. Maya Angelou's quote ... about at the end of the day, people won't remember what you said or did, but they will remember how you made them feel - it's true."



CASEY PAGE, Billings Gazette

“Receiving an award like this so early in my career is a true honor. From not knowing if this was the right career for me and then receiving The DAISY Award was an affirmation this is where I belong.”



# MEET THIS YEAR'S HONOREES

## KATIE WILSON

### BSN, RN ST. VINCENT HEALTHCARE

By Jennifer L. Mason, Brand Ave. Studios Contributing Writer

Katie Wilson has only been a nurse for a little over a year, but she's already making a name for herself. Last year she was the recipient of The DAISY Award, a recognition program honoring nurses for the super-human work they do for patients and families every day.

"I was shocked to receive The DAISY Award last year," Wilson said. "And now, to receive a nomination as one of the top 10 nurses in honor of National Nurses Week is very humbling. I work with so many amazing nurses and I realize there are many great nurses in the Billings area. It put a smile on my face to know my nursing care impacted or changed the course of someone's day."

Wilson began caring for others in high school as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) from the spurring of a friend. It was there in the assisted living home where she realized she enjoyed taking care of patients and being a part of their day. She continued working as a CNA while attending the nursing program at Montana Tech.

"When I was a CNA, my sister was going into nursing as well," Wilson said. "She persuaded me a little bit. I began looking at nursing as a career and researched the various opportunities of a nurse — I was intrigued."

Wilson chose the medical oncology floor to begin her career. It's a mixed floor of medical and oncology needs exposing her to learn a broad array of skills and knowledge. "I thought it was a great opportunity to learn more about how those patients present medically and how to take care of their needs as they go through chemotherapy treatments."

In her short time as a nurse, Wilson notes her coworkers and the patients as the best part of her job. She makes it through the good and bad days with the support and laughter of coworkers throughout her shift.

"I also love watching my patients as they slowly progress to where they can be discharged from the hospital," Wilson said. "It's rewarding to see them leave in a better condition from when they first arrived."

Wilson acknowledges she doesn't know everything as a new nurse. However, she's determined to maintain a positive attitude while being open-minded in each situation she encounters.

"As a new nurse, you don't have to know everything," Wilson said. "You just have to know where to find the information or the resource so you can educate yourself about it."



MIKE CLARK, Billings Gazette

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## Green SHOOT MEDIA

In December 2019, a novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19 surfaced in Wuhan, China, that has led to a pandemic.

The pandemic has led to lockdowns and stay-at-home orders around the world, sports cancellations and uncertainty throughout financial markets. On March 14, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency regarding the coronavirus.

Medical professionals, including nurses, are on the front lines risking exposure while working to limit the spread and symptoms of the virus. The union National Nurses United urges employers to keep their health experts safe by incorporating necessary protocols:

- Employers shall clearly communicate with all health care workers, including notifying nurses when there is a possible or confirmed COVID-19 case.

- Facilities should be prepared for a surge of patients with potential or confirmed cases of the virus, which should include how to isolate and care for patients, along with how to provide safe practices for medical staff.

- Employers shall conduct a thorough investigation after a COVID-19 patient is identified, ensuring the staff who were exposed are identified and notified. Nurses who faced exposure shall be placed on precautionary leave for at least 14 days without losing their pay or benefits.

- Nurses and other health care workers must also be provided with efficient protective gear and any available education and training that may help experts understand the outbreak more efficiently.

### How nurses can stay safe

Since much is still unknown about how COVID-19 spreads, nurses and others in the medical field are at an increased risk of exposure.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urges all nursing professionals to wear properly fitting masks and protective gloves while attending to patients.

### Help a nurse

The coronavirus is a widespread pandemic that is causing major corporations to close their doors temporarily. You can help the medical professionals in your area by listening to guidelines from your state's officials.

Many are prohibiting events that are expected to draw over a specific number of people. To help lessen your exposure and need for medical assistance, avoid visiting high-traffic areas where the risk of contracting the virus is enhanced.

# Nurses on the FRONT LINES OF CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC



STAFF SGT. SERGIO A. GAMBOA, U.S. AIR FORCE VIA ADOBE STOCK/GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

U.S. Air Force Capt. Theresa Snyder, 355th Medical Operations Squadron operational medicine flight commander, wears protective gear at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, on March 27 while helping with COVID-19 testing.





# Nurses should keep portfolio updated for **FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES**



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### Green SHOOT MEDIA

A professional portfolio is not necessarily a resume or curriculum vitae, but it can be an important tool as you navigate your nursing career.

Building a portfolio includes creating a visual channel to showcase your work highlights and the milestones you have reached.

To understand how a portfolio acts as a supporting document to other career credentials, check out the difference between a resume and a CV, as defined by the Internship and Career Center:

- A resume is a short one- or two-page form that emphasizes skills, industry experience and education achievements.

- A curriculum vitae is used to show your academic accomplishments and is most beneficial when applying for positions in academia, fellowships and grants.

If you're trying to break into the nursing field, employing the expertise of a certified resume writer can be an excellent strategy to impress hiring managers. Once you begin your journey in health care, consider documenting your career by building a portfolio.

### The importance of a portfolio

The University of Alabama in Huntsville suggests that a nursing portfolio is a sourcebook for

future employers. It should contain documents that back up your work history found in a resume. When logged chronologically, it will show the precision of your professional development and progression.

It's an efficient log of essential documents like licenses, continued education certificates and proof of your achievements.

### Where to create your portfolio

Many nurses choose to build their portfolio with both a hard copy and a digital version. It's good practice to keep a few copies that can be easily restored online. You need both because employers may vary with how they choose to receive the portfolio. Some may ask you to bring it with you to an interview, while others prefer to have the document emailed.

### What to include

Because a portfolio is a tool to market yourself to potential employers, it should highlight your achievements both academically and professionally.

Make sure to include letters of recommendation and appreciation you have earned and brief descriptions of roles you have held in the nursing field. Of course, you should also log your licenses and certification cards.



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# Be sure to thank a nurse

## Green SHOOT MEDIA

If you or a loved one has ever faced a life-threatening situation or a tense moment under medical watch, a licensed nurse likely assisted.

Their compassion and knowledge are effective in overcoming emergencies and making patients feel comfortable as they recover.

If someone in the nursing field impacted your life, take the time to thank them for their service.

Thanking a nurse doesn't have to cost a fortune. A small token of appreciation can be significant and encourage a professional to excel when working in a high-stress environment.

If you're struggling to show a medical expert how their presence changed your life for the better, consider thanking them with these ideas.

## Handwritten note

A personalized, handwritten note is an excellent way to show your gratitude for a nurse. In your letter, reflect on the situation you faced and how the nurse's assistance made you feel comforted.

You should consider using high-quality paper or a durable card so the nurse can look back on the note when they face challenges throughout their career.

## A healthy gift basket

While nurses dedicate their lives to im-

proving the health of others, sometimes their own wellbeing gets overlooked.

You can provide them with high-protein snacks like beef jerky or nuts and as well as a variety of fruits to boost their energy.

Many nurses also rely on small levels of caffeine to get through rigorous shifts. Consider gifting them with a gift card to a local coffee shop or a bag of freshly ground beans.

## Comfortable clothing

Nurses are on their feet for an extended

portion of their workday. Check the hospital gift shop or your local outlet store for a pair of universal compression socks. Pressure from these stockings promotes blood flow by enhancing the efficiency of blood vessels.

If you know the nurse's approximate shoe size, you can also consider gifting them with a pair that uses memory-foam padding or a comfortable insert. You may also find unique scrubs at a uniform shop that showcases their personality.

Whether you buy a gift for your nurse or draft a compassionate letter to show your appreciation, your gratitude will be appreciated.

ADOBE  
STOCK VIA  
GREEN SHOOT  
MEDIA



# Nurses play an important role in health care system

## Green SHOOT MEDIA

Nurses play a monumental role in the health care setting.

They use their knowledge to assist in life-threatening situations and act as advocates toward patient safety and trust. Their presence is varied and valuable, and should be respected and applauded throughout your community.

A nursing professional isn't limited to practicing in a clinic or hospital. In fact, many with RN or LPN qualifications accept jobs that place them in unique settings across the globe.

Experts hold positions for schools and summer camps, as traveling aides and hospice nurses who help patients find comfort in their final days. Find out why nurses are so significant in health care, as suggested by the Roseman University of Health Sciences.

## Trust with patients

Nurses are not only responsible for monitoring progress and administering medications during their daily duties, but

they also become trusted advocates for patients. Because those under care rely on having someone to talk to regarding their symptoms and concerns, nursing professionals quickly become supporters.

Doctors generally make their rounds once a day. Nurses, however, deliver hour-to-hour care throughout their workday. This often leads to a wholesome relationship between patient and provider, which results in better communication for the those who are in care.

## Improve outcomes

Nurses with a bachelor of science in nursing degree (BSN) are shown to have a vital presence in health care settings. A report from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation shows that hospitals with more BSN-prepared nursing professionals have lower patient mortality rates, shorter average patient stays and reduced health care costs.

Other studies report that their role also leads to lower instances of:

- Incidence of pressure ulcers.



PHOTO BY ZACH VESSELS  
ON UNSPLASH

- Postoperative deep vein thrombosis.

- Hospital-acquired infections.

## Education

Nurses are also excellent at educating both patients and their caregivers about how to make healthier decisions. While most information is given during a hos-

pital stay, once a patient is released, they are armed with more knowledge for living better at home.

Nursing professionals are also advocates of informing their communities about lifestyle risks. They often provide advice about the importance of regular checkups and being adamant about screenings and regular exercise.



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**You are nurses,  
and we thank you with all of our hearts.**

