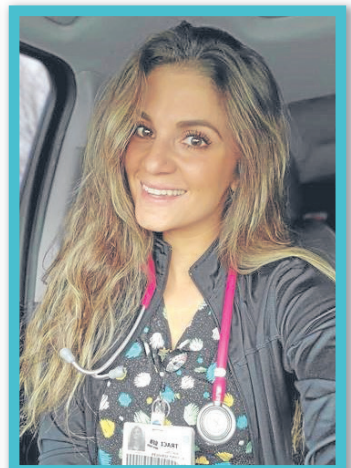


# Nurses

The Heart of Health Care

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## CELEBRATING NATIONAL NURSES WEEK 2020

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## The Heart of Health Care

### NURSES: THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

We could not have picked a better title to honor the nursing vocation. Indeed, nurses are the heart and soul of hospitals, clinics, schools, workplaces, residential facilities, in-home care, and much more. Nurses educate, console, relate, comfort and endear themselves to patients and families. Nursing is a demanding profession that requires extraordinary skill and compassion. These tireless professionals deserve every bit of recognition they will receive during National Nurses Week which kicks off this week. Locally, The Post-Star is taking part in honoring our area's own nurses with a section and a future awards event with the support of sponsors including Glens Falls Hospital, Saratoga Hospital, Parks Heritage Federal Credit Union and Bare Bones Furniture.

### AND THEN THERE WERE 10:

The contest began with a call for nominations in March. We encouraged the public to nominate nursing professionals who made an impact on the lives of loved ones and the community at large. The community answered with 50 nominations. These nominations were then narrowed down to 10.

### JUDGING THE TOP 10:

Three judges: Brian Corcoran, Julie Mosher, and Csilla Bell, reviewed all 50 nominations and chose nine winners. The 10th winner was chosen by our readers. Read about each winner within this section and online at [www.poststar.com/special-section](http://www.poststar.com/special-section).

### THE AWARDS:

The honorees will be recognized at an awards breakfast at a later date. More information to come after we get through the current health crisis.



## OUR JUDGES

### BRIAN CORCORAN



Brian Corcoran is the president and publisher of The Post-Star. He has been employed at The Post-Star since 2007 originally as controller and then took on the additional role as operations director in 2011. Brian is also a Regional Finance Director for Lee Enterprises with financial oversight of The Post-Star and The Citizen in Auburn, NY.

Prior to joining the paper, Corcoran was controller at Champlain Stone Ltd. in Warrensburg and a financial analyst at the General Electric Research Center in Niskayuna. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Le Moyne College and a MBA in accounting from Union College.

Corcoran currently serves as board treasurer for the Rotary Club of Glens Falls and the Tri-County United Way. He also serves on the board of directors of the Family YMCA of Glens Falls. He previously served as president of the board of directors at the Franklin Community Center in Saratoga Springs and board treasurer for The Conkling Center in Glens Falls.

### CSILLA BELL



Csilla Bell has been with Parks Heritage FCU since December, 2011. Prior to that Csilla worked at a different financial institution locally.

She started with the credit union in the Member Services department (for about one year) and then moved over to the lending department and eventually was promoted to Director of Lending where she ran the loan department for approximately 5 years. Csilla has been in her current role of Manager/CEO of the credit union since August 2019. She is a Leadership Adirondack Alumni, class of 2015 and she is a second year student of CUNA

(Credit Union National Association) Management School.

### JULIE MOSHER MS, RN, CDE



Julie Mosher is the Manager of Nursing Education at Glens Falls Hospital. Julie has been a full-time employee of Glens Falls Hospital since 2014. Prior to joining the hospital full-time, Julie worked at the hospital as a per diem nurse since 2007 and from 2008-2014 was as school nurse in the Greenwich Central School District. Julie holds an associate degree in Nursing from SUNY Adirondack, a bachelor's degree in Nursing and master's degree in Nursing Administration from Empire State College. Julie volunteers with the Greenwich Fire Department as an EMS first responder and serves as the Town of Greenwich's

Health Officer. Julie enjoys spending time with her friends and family, and is an avid fan of her sons, one a nursing student and the other a college baseball player. Julie resides in Greenwich with her husband (David), two sons (Kameron and Carson) and her golden retriever (Sophie).

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Meet the Judges ..... Page 2**

Abigail Bayer-Pratt.....Page 4

Renee Brooks .....Page 4

Katie Fowler .....Page 5

Jennifer Hogan .....Page 5

Caitlyn Johnson .....Page 8

Heidi Lleras .....Page 9

Kim Mattes .....Page 10

Gavin Seabury .....Page 10

Kimberly Trapasso .....Page 11

Reader’s Choice - Traci DiLorenzo .....Page 11



**THANK YOU  
TO THE NURSES  
WHO SUPPORT  
AND CARE  
FOR OUR  
COMMUNITY.**



# ABBY BAYER-PRATT

NYS OPWDD

New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities

**“**It started when I was diagnosed with Type-1 Diabetes when I was 10 years old,” said Bayer-Pratt. Bayer-Pratt initially Biology at Saint Michael’s College in Colchester, Vermont, initially thinking she would be a math or science teacher.

“Going into my senior year at St. Mike’s, I was looking for a job that was a little more meaningful than retail, which is where I was working before. I applied at Clara Barton Camp, the camp for girls with Type-1 Diabetes in Massachusetts,” said Bayer-Pratt.

Bayer-Pratt worked at the camp the summer of 2008 as a counselor.

“I really, really enjoyed helping these kids learn about their diabetes, and how to live with it, and how to live a regular life while having diabetes. It clicked with me that I was good at it and that I liked it. It felt like the right path for me,” she said.

Bayer-Pratt got her associates degree from SUNY Adirondack, and her BSN from the University of Vermont.

Bayer-Pratt works for Tidepool, a California-based nonprofit. The company uses software to pool data for people with diabetes from multiple sources and devices, into one set of metrics for the use to interpret in one place.

“The technology is not brand specific—it’s device-agnostic. You can have devices from several manufacturers, which many of us do. You can upload metrics from various devices into one graph, one profile, one report—and get the data in a meaningful way,” said Bayer-Pratt.

**“I really, really enjoyed helping these kids learn about their diabetes, and how to live with it, and how to live a regular life while having diabetes.”**

**Abby Bayer-Pratt**

Tidepool is one of only two organizations that allow users to do this. The company is also developing an app to create a closed-loop system with insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitors, that can be controlled directly from a smartphone.

“A large component of my job is education,” she said. “We’re trying to change the support model. We’re creating a system that empowers patients to feel educated first. I can come in and do things for you as a nurse. But doesn’t it give you better long-term outcome if I teach you how to do those things yourself? That’s what we do as the support team. We want people to take control of their health.”

Bayer-Pratt is celebrating one year of marriage. In her free time, she does a lot of yoga, and enjoys goes to the YMCA. She and her husband enjoy hiking in the summertime, when the snow is gone. She crochets and reads.

“If I’m going to do something, I want it to be physical fitness where I get something out of it, or I want to be home by myself,” she chuckled.

*By Andrea Harwood Palmer*



# RENEE BROOKS

Glens Falls Hospital GI Center

**R**enee Brooks got an early start to her nursing career, graduating high school with her LPN license.

“Ever since I was a little girl, I wanted to be a nurse. I wanted to help people. It was kind of a no-brainer when I got into high school. I was in the top of my class, and I decided to go to BOCES instead of Regents-type things. I graduated high school with my LPN,” said Brooks.

Brooks completed the LPN program at the BOCES Saratoga Campus, then took a year off before returning to SUNY Adirondack for her Registered Nurse degree.

“I started working as an LPN while I was going to school for my RN degree at SUNY Adirondack. When I graduated as an RN, I had been working at Glens Falls Hospital for a year and was able to transition from an LPN into an RN,” said Brooks.

Brooks has worked at Glens Falls Hospital for over 30 years, and is often described as calming, confident, selfless and “the face you hope to see when you arrive at the hospital”. Starting on the med-surg floor as a staff nurse, Brooks is now the

**“Ever since I was a little girl, I wanted to be a nurse. I wanted to help people. It was kind of a no-brainer when I got into high school. I was in the top of my class, and I decided to go to BOCES instead of Regents-type things. I graduated high school with my LPN.”**

**Renee Brooks**

Assistant Nurse Manager of the GI Center. She is a practicing nurse, as well as a nurse leader who orchestrates staff, technicians and other nurses within her department.

Brooks grew up in Lake Luzerne, and now lives in Hadley. She enjoys spending being with her family when she has free time.

*By Andrea Harwood Palmer*





# KATIE FOWLER

Glens Falls Hospital

**K**atie Fowler began her adult life thinking she wanted to be a dentist. Everything changed she started working in an assisted living facility to pay the bills.

“I went to Saint Michael’s College and got a degree in Biology. I started working at a nursing home, in the Alzheimer’s ward, to start paying my student loans. I just fell in love with taking care of people. It fit me instantly and I knew it was what I was meant to do,” said Fowler.

Fowler moved back home from Vermont and got her nursing degree at SUNY Adirondack. She worked for a year and a half at Albany Med in the Trauma Surgical Unity, then moved back to Glens Falls Hospital as the commute began to wear on her.

“I worked in the ICU of Glens Falls Hospital for four years. While I was there, I got my master’s in nursing education. I also got certified in critical care nursing. Two and a half years ago, I became the Clinical Nurse Educator for the ICU at Glens Falls Hospital,” said Fowler.

Fowler runs the nurse residency program at the hospital. The program was recently accredited with distinction from the American Nursing Credentialing

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**Katie Fowler**

Center (ANCC).

Fowler has a 9-month-old daughter who keeps her busy. In her free time, she and her husband are bird-watching enthusiasts.

“Every year, we start a list and keep track of all the birds we’ve seen. Most weekends we travel around and look for birds. Our daughter is named Phoebe, after the Eastern Phoebe,” she said.

*By Andrea Harwood Palmer*



# JENNIFER HOGAN

Hudson Headwaters Health Network

**J**ennifer Hogan has been described as passionate about her work, an amazing nurse and being the first to offer a hand to those in need.

“I started working as a nurses’ aide at Saratoga Hospital many years ago. I wanted to take it a step further, so I continued my education and became a Registered Nurse,” she said.

Hogan works for the pediatric office of Hudson Headwaters Health Network, as a Pediatric Care Manager. In her current role, she coordinates care for high-risk, high-need children who may have experienced trauma and often have comorbidities such as diabetes, heart disease and other illness. Care is coordinated with families, parents, other providers and other nurses.

“I like being able to help people who aren’t able to help themselves yet. I like helping them get the knowledge and skills they need to keep themselves and their family safe and healthy,” said Hogan.

Hogan lives in Greenwich. She is an EMT and firefighter at the Greenwich Firehouse 12834. She

**“I like being able to help people who aren’t able to help themselves yet. I like helping them get the knowledge and skills they need to keep themselves and their family safe and healthy.”**

**Jennifer Hogan**

participates regularly in the GFD Fit for Duty 5K Run/Walk for the fire department.

“I have a wonderful husband and three great kids,” she said. “I’ve been married for 25 years, and a nurse for 23 of those.”

“When I have free time, I like to spend time with my family and friends. We’re all involved with the fire department. I like spending time with the people I love,” she said.

*By Andrea Harwood Palmer*







## CELEBRATING NURSES WEEK

We salute our nurses today and every day for their exemplary practice and commitment to providing world-class care in every encounter and every setting. To all of our nurses, for their dedication to our patients and our community,

*Thank you.*



Glens Falls  
Hospital



# CAITLYN JOHNSON

Hudson Headwaters,  
Broad Street

Caitlyn Johnson's grandmother inspired her at a young age to become a nurse.

"Nursing is something I always wanted to pursue. My nan was a nurse, and she was always someone I wanted to emulate," said Johnson.

"I started off as a CNA for a little while, then became an LPN in 2008. I worked at the hospital for a couple years, then I took a break from nursing and worked at Finch Pruyn for 7 years. For a long time, being an RN felt like it was unattainable, with going to school and working full time. Then I decided to just do it—to go for it," she said.

Johnson credits her family and fiancé with helping her finish the rigorous program.

"I ultimately left Finch Pruyn to focus on the nursing program full-time. It was a wonderful program. My family was very supportive. My fiancé helped me get through. I graduated last May and have been working at the Broad Street Urgent Care Center for Hudson Headwaters since then," she said.

"I'm fortunate in that I have a great group of people who I work with there. Obviously, the current situation with the COVID-19 crisis has been challenging, but we

**"I'm fortunate in that I have a great group of people who I work with there. Obviously, the current situation with the COVID-19 crisis has been challenging, but we have a great group. Very supportive. I wouldn't want to go through this with anyone else."**

**Caitlyn Johnson**

have a great group. Very supportive. I wouldn't want to go through this with anyone else," said Johnson.

Johnson enjoys fitness and cooking, with health and self-care in mind.

"In my free time, I really like to run," said Johnson.

"I do it for my mental health and sanity. I also love cooking. My fiancé and I are always cooking up different appetizers and dishes. We like having family over. I have a very close family, and I love getting together with them."

*By Andrea Harwood Palmer*



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— MARY JO LAPOSTA, PH.D, RN  
Chief nursing officer and senior vice president of patient care  
and organizational excellence at Saratoga Hospital

# HEIDI LLERAS

Fort Hudson  
Nursing Home

**H**eidi Lleras is a Hudson Falls native. She continues to live and work in the town she loves.

"I was a nurses' aide right out of high school, for about 8 years. I've been an RN since 2007. I've worked at Fort Hudson the whole entire time. In fact, they paid for me to go to school," said Lleras.

Lleras works on the rehab floor of Fort Hudson, and knew she wanted to be a nurse at that particular facility from the time she was a young child.

"My sister did a summer program at Fort Hudson. My family went to visit her during the program. I was about 12 years old. I knew immediately, from the moment I got there, that that is what I wanted to do," said Lleras.

Lleras finds satisfaction in helping people on the rehab floor reach independence. Though it is often bittersweet to say goodbye to the patients she works so hard to help, Lleras enjoys seeing the tangible results of the hard work they put in together.

There is a large educational component to Lleras' work, both with patients and their families.

"I really like helping people. I like the feeling I get when they say to me, 'Thank God you're here!' I really enjoy the rehab floor because I'm able to teach my patients to go home. I'm able to watch them get better,

**"I really like helping people. I like the feeling I get when they say to me, 'Thank God you're here!' I really enjoy the rehab floor because I'm able to teach my patients to go home. I'm able to watch them get better, and get back to living how they want to live. That's the best part."**

**Heidi Lleras**

and get back to living how they want to live. That's the best part," said Lleras.

"It sounds crazy, but I also really love doing wound care. It's my favorite thing to do on the rehab floor," she laughed.

When she's not working, Lleras enjoys being outdoors and active, and spending time with her boyfriend, two dogs and cat.

"I love to ski. That's my favorite thing to do. I also love to go hiking, kayaking, anything outdoors."

*By Andrea Harwood Palmer*



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# KIM MATTES

Warren County Health Services

**K**im Mattes moved to the Glens Falls region when she retired. But retirement just wasn't for her.

"I found I wasn't happy being retired. It didn't sit well with me. So, I went back to nursing," said Mattes.

"I spent many, many years in a trauma center in New Jersey. My other forte is emergency medicine, emergency management, and emergency preparedness. I have FEMA certifications to run incidents like what we are experiencing now with COVID-19. I oversaw a mobile ER when Hurricane Sandy happened. I did H1N1 prep, set up for tents. SARS. Swine Flu. Ebola. All of that. So yes, I feel I am very well prepared for this situation. Not happy with it, but prepared for it," said Mattes.

Mattes is now an RN for Warren County Health Services, and cares for people in their homes.

"I love being part of this type of nursing. It is very rewarding to me to see my patients comfortable and feeling better in their own homes. I'm able to help put them at ease, feel better. I'm able to give them the education and tools they need to express how they feel to their doctors and caregivers. Every patient should be able to advocate for themselves, and I should be able to advocate for them," she said.

Mattes got her RN degree from Holy Name Hospital in Teaneck, New Jersey. She went on to get her BSN at Ramapo College of New Jersey.

**"I found I wasn't happy being retired. It didn't sit well with me. So, I went back to nursing."**

Kim Mattes

"I would never have thought in all my years of nursing that I would have received so much satisfaction from being in a patient's home with them. I'm the proverbial adrenaline junkie. But this is a different kind of rewarding, and that's what makes me continue to do what I'm doing," said Mattes.

"My feelings for nursing are, we need to remember the art. The art is in caring. Knowledge comes with experience, the art comes with the heart," she said.

In her free time, Mattes enjoys hanging out with her friends, trying out new foods at new restaurants, supporting local businesses, playing with her dog, walking, and visiting the lake when she's able. She also enjoys wine-tasting.

"Nursing is that frontline. Nursing is the reason people are alive. Nursing is what we do to help. I don't think there could be a better profession. I really don't. I am wholeheartedly a nurse. I am always and will always be, a nurse."

By Andrea Harwood Palmer



# GAVIN SEABURY

Glens Falls Hospital

**G**avin Seabury was born and raised in Glens Falls, and currently lives Downtown with his wife and their cat.

"I come from a long family line of medical personnel, including my paternal grandmother who was an RN, my father who is a former ER technician, and my brother who is currently an operating room RN," said Seabury.

"Growing up, I was enthralled with stories from my father about his time in ER medicine," he said. "When I began looking at a career change in my late 20's, it was a combination of his stories, encouragement from a close friend, and career advice from Hudson Mohawk AHEC that led me to consider a field in medicine. I was drawn to the field of nursing with its mix of science and humanity, allowing me to give back to society. I love the day-to-day interactions with the members of our community while helping to heal them."

Seabury studied Nursing at SUNY Adirondack.

"It's a fantastic school with amazing nursing instructors and staff," he said.

Seabury has worked at Glens Falls Hospital for three years. He transitioned to the Emergency Room last summer, and recently became certified in Pediatric Advanced Life Support.

When he's not working, Seabury enjoys being outside

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Gavin Seabury

and active.

"Depending on the season, you'll find me cycling, hiking, touring craft breweries in the Northeast, and attending living history events," he said.

By Andrea Harwood Palmer





# KIMBERLY TRAPASSO

Hudson Headwaters Health Network  
- Warrensburg Health Center

**K**im Trapasso is a Warrensburg native, and lives there still with her husband and family.

She was first drawn to nursing because of her uncle, who had cystic fibrosis.

"I wanted to do something in the healthcare field, because of my uncle. After being a respiratory therapist for a few years, I decided to go back to school to get my nursing degree. I wanted to be able to do more for my patients. I wanted to get to know them better, and be challenged in a different way," said Trapasso.

Trapasso received her associated degree at SUNY Adirondack, then completed her Bachelors at SUNY Plattsburgh. She worked at Hudson Headwaters Health Network for many years, recently making the move to work at Glens Falls Hospital full-time.

Trapasso is very active, participating in long-distance running races and instructing indoor spin cycling.

"I have been a cycling instructor for the past year and half at Cycling Studio on Park in

**"I wanted to do something in the healthcare field, because of my uncle. After being a respiratory therapist for a few years, I decided to go back to school to get my nursing degree. I wanted to be able to do more for my patients. I wanted to get to know them better, and be challenged in a different way."**

**Kimberly Trapasso**

Warrensburg," said Trapasso. "I like to hang out with my children, take them to the playground, go for walks, go on hikes. I love being with my family."

*By Andrea Harwood Palmer*



# TRACI DILORENZO

Glens Falls Hospital  
READER'S CHOICE

**T**raci DiLorenzo is a mother of two and has worked as a Registered Nurse at Glens Falls Hospital for the past two years.

"I've been doing nursing in some way for 12 years now. I started when I was 17 years old, as a CNA, right out of high school" said DiLorenzo.

DiLorenzo worked at The Pines as a CNA for many years before she had her two children.

"I took a break when I had my kids. When I was ready to go back, I went through the LPN program, and continued directly through at SUNY Adirondack to get my RN degree. I've been at the hospital ever since," said DiLorenzo.

"It's been such a big passion in my life. Even as a little girl, I always told my parents I wanted to be a nurse. I would play pretend, pretending to be a nurse. I'm finally living up to that role, and I just love it," she said.

DiLorenzo works on the 4-West surgical floor of Glens Falls Hospital. She takes care of surgical patients pre- and post-operation. At times, she takes care of patients from medical overflow.

"I get a really good range of things in my role," said

**"It's been such a big passion in my life. Even as a little girl, I always told my parents I wanted to be a nurse. I would play pretend, pretending to be a nurse. I'm finally living up to that role, and I just love it."**

**Traci DiLorenzo**

DiLorenzo. "I'm hoping to one day transfer over to labor and delivery, at The Snuggery. That's been a main goal of mine for a long time."

"I love just being there for my patients. It's such a rewarding feeling to know I'm making a difference to the people I care for," she said.

DiLorenzo enjoys spending time with her kids, spending time outdoors and working out.

"Going to the gym is a great stress relief for me," said DiLorenzo. "And I love spending time with my two children."

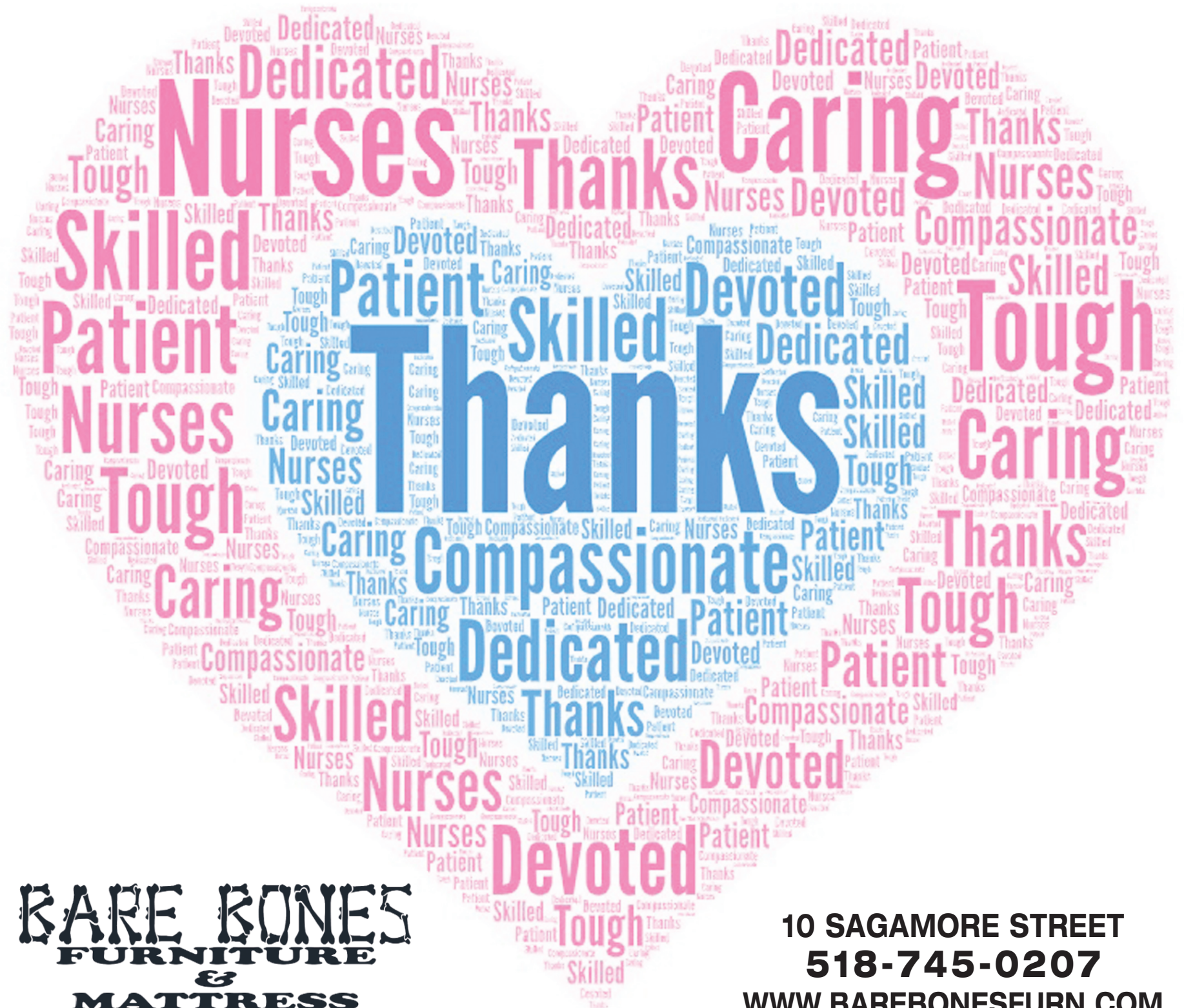
*By Andrea Harwood Palmer*





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