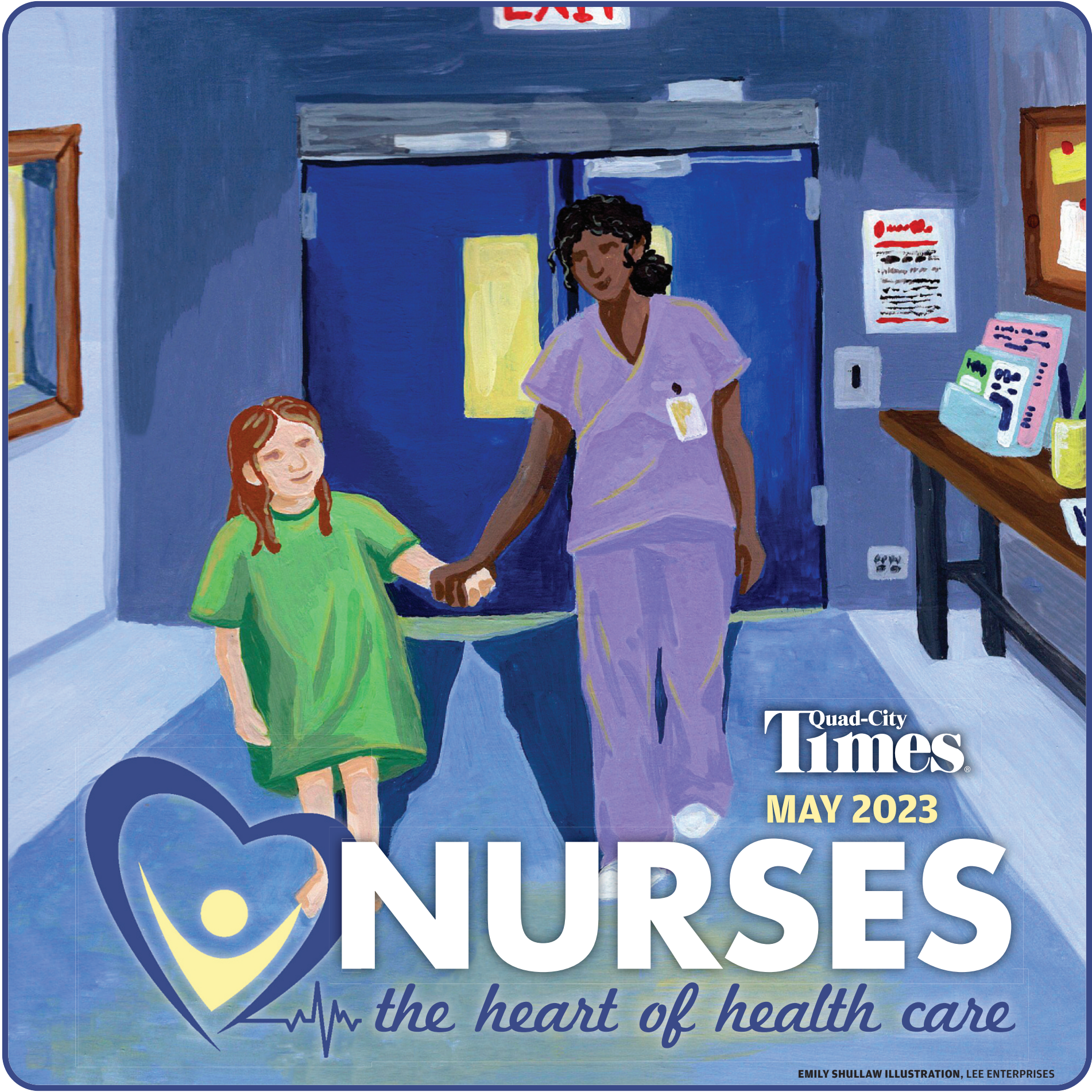




Quad-City
Times

MAY 2023

NURSES

the heart of health care

EMILY SHULLAW ILLUSTRATION, LEE ENTERPRISES

BEGIN

A CAREER OF CARE.



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UnityPoint Health

Thank You Nurses for Making a Difference

National Nurses Week is an annual celebration of nurses worldwide for the work they do. It provides all of us with an opportunity to show our appreciation for nurses and to recognize their profession's vital and unique contributions to health care and our communities at large.



Today we join in that celebration by introducing you to 10 people making their mark on the Quad-Cities. Their chosen profession demands extraordinary skill and dedication. They all exhibit abundant drive and determination, but first and foremost, a desire to make a difference. They

exemplify what it means to put others before yourself. This year's honorees will tell you that they are just doing their jobs. But those who know them well have shared examples of how each has gone beyond the call of duty in bringing compassion, respect, and empathy to their care.

Each nurse recognized in today's tribute demonstrates a true passion for patients' health and well-being, as well as a compassion that soothes the ill and their loved ones. These are difficult times for health care workers, who've proven now more than ever that they deserve our thanks.

That includes a special thank you to Genesis Health System and UnityPoint Health for partnering with us to recognize and share the stories of these incredible nurses. And to all the nurses across the Quad Cities, we thank you.

You are the heart of healthcare.

Debbie Anselm

Celebrating NURSES Week



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Our Unforgettable Nurses

THERESA MAIN, MSN, MSHA, RN
President of Genesis Medical Center, Silvis Nursing
Services Executive, Genesis Health System

Most of us will never forget the special nurse who was there to care for us or a loved one during a health crisis, a hospital stay, an illness, or even a routine visit to the doctor.

Nurses are at our sides to celebrate new life and navigate the end of life. We trust them to calm us, to encourage us, and to explain to us all that is the unfamiliar in health care.

During National Nurses Week, we honor the many contributions of nurses. We celebrate the many diverse roles, specialties, and settings in nursing. Most of all, we acknowledge the amazing resilience of nurses. After all, nurses weathered three years of COVID-19, only to emerge from the pandemic in a “new normal” for health care challenged by unprecedented financial pressures, staffing vacancies and sustained stress levels.

Today, more than ever, it’s important to thank our nurses. Give them the same praise and admiration they received during those early, uncertain days of the

pandemic. Most important, continue to champion our nurses and the nursing profession, so we can retain and recruit more women and men to serve this special calling.

The birth of modern nursing is credited to Florence Nightingale, “the lady with the lamp” who worked tirelessly to help injured soldiers during the Crimean War. Nearly 170 years later, nurses are still tireless, still dedicated and still bringing comfort.

And what about that special nurse you will never forget?

She or he can be found in the actions of countless other nurses who perform some of the most important daily tasks in health care. Professionalism in nursing has grown exponentially since the days of Florence Nightingale. Yet, we always return to the simple reason why we most value nurses: They are there for us when we are at our most vulnerable.

It’s no wonder nursing is consistently rated as one of the most trusted professions.

It’s no wonder nurses are so unforgettable.



Theresa Main

Meeting the Demand for Difference Makers

TRACY POELVOORDE, PHD, RN,
Chancellor, Trinity College of Nursing
& Health Sciences

As our country's healthcare system continues to find its footing in a post-pandemic era, the effect on the healthcare labor market continues to be challenging. Healthcare systems are grappling with shortages of employees across the board but especially in direct patient care roles. The lack of supply of healthcare workers has created more pressure on colleges to increase the number of graduates. Trinity College of Nursing & Health Sciences continues to evolve to meet these demands.

Higher education rapidly shifted, and we adjusted how we engage with our students. At Trinity College, faculty and staff understand their role in helping students accomplish their educational and career goals and graduate educated, well-prepared healthcare professionals.

We know that our people, facilities, technology, learning opportunities and affordability influence how students experience Trinity College. Here students don't just learn. They lead. We offer experience-based clinical learning in a hospital environment where you can earn a degree that will play a vital role in your life and the lives of others. Here, you can major in making a difference.

Technology heavily drives today's care. We have integrated high-fidelity simulation, engaging learning strategies, and real-world hands-on experiences to build the nursing, radiology and medical laboratory sciences workforce of the future. But equally important are the soft skills needed to care for others. Trinity College students work across healthcare disciplines to hone these essential skills.

From a strong commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, robust learning opportunities, encouraging regular feedback from our teams and prioritizing the health and well-being of our students — showing our students how much they matter is at the center of everything we do.



We trace the history of Trinity College back to 1898 when Moline Public School of Nursing opened; 1899 when St. Anthony's Hospital School of Nursing opened; and 1916 when Lutheran Hospital School for Nurses opened, each with four students, all interested in learning the discipline of nursing. With medical advances made in the late 1930's, these three institutions continued to serve the people of the Quad Cities area, and their respective schools of nursing thrived. This tradition continues today as Trinity College launched a new Medical Laboratory Sciences program accepting its first students this summer.

We have deep roots in the Quad Cities community with service-learning experiences to enrich the student educational experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Trinity College works very closely with UnityPoint Health to create pathways for students to further their education and grow within the organization. They volunteer to support blood drives, flu vaccination clinics or serve as assistants in medical tents at community events. By offering real-life educational healthcare experiences while instilling the values of service, caring, inclusion and lifelong learning, we're building a selfless, dedicated healthcare workforce of tomorrow.

Nurses and health sciences professionals entering our profession today need to be flexible, resourceful and caring. Trinity College proudly partners with students to grow the skills and expertise needed for success in an ever-changing healthcare industry.

Our Calling is to Care

JANE DENTEN
Chief Nursing Executive,
UnityPoint Health - Trinity

For the second consecutive year, UnityPoint Health® has been recognized as one of the nation's top places to work in healthcare by a national industry publication. I'm honored to be part of a strong, values-oriented culture led by our amazing team members.

Our nurses are at the heart of that culture. They are the largest segment of our team member population, making a difference every day. Together, we achieve a greater impact for our patients and communities than any of us could hope to reach alone. We have a solid mission and set of values, a strong nursing workforce, and a reputation as a great place to work.

During National Nurses Week May 6-12, we celebrate the very special contributions of our nurses and the unique stories that called them into healthcare. That calling unites us whether we're caring at the bedside, in someone's home or in our communities.

Nurses are often the first smiling faces patients meet and the last ones they see before going home. Every day, they make a difference in people's lives whether it's delivering medications, caring for a wound, lending an ear or advocating for our patients' health. Despite a continued challenging healthcare landscape, I've never been prouder to serve alongside these wonderful people.

Our team continues to tackle new challenges head-on, providing the care patients need to heal and once again thrive in their communities. Our nurses really step up to advocate for patients and their families.

UnityPoint Health has made a concentrated effort to invest in its team members, offering traditional benefits, opportunities for personal growth and development, recognition and well-being resources. And it shows.

Our nurses are endless caregivers. They do a wonderful job of not just caring for patients, but for each other, too.

Nurses are the key to helping us improve our systems, by catching potential events before they happen and



Jane Denten

preventing events from happening elsewhere.

Nursing is one of the greatest professions on Earth. For many, it's a calling to servanthood, and a career that combines science with the ability to care for each other. It's why we celebrate our nurses, not just during Nurses Week, but every day. No matter the role or the setting, we want to give a huge "Thank You" to all UnityPoint Health nurses for everything they do!

There are many traits we recognize in today's modern nurse. A stellar few come to mind: self-sacrifice, resiliency and unwavering commitment. These traits have all withstood the test of time. The amazing people featured here embody all these traits. Their knowledge and expertise enhance the quality of clinical care and patient outcomes, but most importantly, this year's honored nurses reflect the heart of health care. They are among our most trusted professionals, admired by their patients, communities and the healthcare organizations they serve. And when our nurses provide amazing care, you can get back to the busy life you love.

CHRISTA NICKLAUS

Reader's Choice Nominee

Genesis Cardiac Intervention Unit (CIU)

KRISTIN DEMARR

Christa Nicklaus received the Reader's Choice honor this year, garnering the most votes for the 2023 Heart of Healthcare. The person who nominated her said, "Christa has been a nurse with Genesis for 25 years. Christa is compassionate and caring, always putting her patients first. Christa always ensures that her patients are comfortable, and their needs do not go unmet. She takes an interest in her patients, making sure their concerns are heard and that they feel valued." Nicklaus stated that this honor was very unexpected. She said, "There's so many other people that are deserving. I'm very happy. It was a pleasant surprise, and I'm grateful, but we work as a team."

Nicklaus grew up in Mount Joy and obtained her nursing degree from Marycrest in Davenport, Iowa. She initially quit nursing school when she got married. She was a stay-at-home mother to three children. After her youngest child was born, she decided to go back and finish the nursing degree and take her state boards. She recalls the nurse that helped her deliver her youngest son, "She was so phenomenal, and I just thought how wonderful she was. Her name was Christina." That nurse inspired Nicklaus to pick back up where she left off. She took the state boards on her 40th birthday and became a nurse. She started working as a nurse in the Cardiac Intervention Unit (CIU), and now, 25 years later, that's where she is still working to this day.

She talked about how she always wanted to be a nurse and to help people. As a child, some of her favorite books had nurses as the main characters. She loved reading stories about nurses. One of the philosophies she goes by in her job is "I always treat the patient as if they were my grandma or my mom. What would I want for them?" She also appreciates the family's input for the patient as they know best what is going on with their family member. Nicklaus explained how the patient is also considered a part of the team. "The patient has to have their input too. They are a team member. They are the ones that we're

“Somebody once said that ‘People don’t care how much you know until they know that you care.’ And I just care for people and love helping people.”



all there for. So, we have to listen to them and what they have to say because they are part of the team."

When asked what her favorite part of the job was, she stated, "Helping and caring for my patient. Somebody once said that 'People don't care how much you know until they know that you care.' And I just care for people and love helping people. Mr. Rogers always said, 'Look for the people who are the helpers.' And that's what I want to be. One time someone asked me to give my opinion on something, and I said 'Well, you know, I'm not a charge nurse or a nurse manager. I'm just a bedside nurse.' And when I die, if they think 'She was a good bedside nurse,' that would be OK with me. Nurses are caring people, but we don't have a monopoly on it because our physicians truly care, the MRI techs, the housekeepers, and the maintenance men; everybody together is there for the patient, and it's not just the nurse." She expressed the wish that they would have days to celebrate each of these careers that help take care of everyone within the hospital because it is all of these people, in a combined effort, that make the difference and help to care for the patients.

Nicklaus talked about how the physicians and nurses are really all a team, and she couldn't do her job without everyone else on the team. She also stated, "The nurses that are coming up, they have a lot of challenges right now in healthcare, and we're so thankful for the young ones that are still coming up and wanting to be in nursing and will be able to take over for us."

Nicklaus views her job as a learning experience as well. She states, "I learn every day from the people I work with, the doctors and the nurse practitioners, all of them. But even my patients. Sometimes I learn about what they're doing for their health care, but sometimes everything, like everyday things. You learn, and I'm also old now. I'm in that new stage in life. I have all these years of living experience. I don't want to say I'm an antique, but those years of experience help you relate to people as well."



NATIONAL NURSES WEEK: MAY 6 – 12, 2023

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KELSEY PARRISH

RN

UnityPoint Health Trinity Rock Island

BY: KRISTIN DEMARR

Kelsey Parrish, from Moline, IL, is a registered nurse in the cardiac treatment unit at UnityPoint Health Trinity Rock Island. When she was in high school and was trying to figure out what she wanted to do as a career, she had the opportunity to take a CNA class at a different school to see if it would be something she would be interested in. She enjoyed the class, but she still wasn't sure whether she wanted to be a nurse. A few years later, she had a family member's health deteriorated and it became vital that extra care be provided. Kelsey helped provide care for that family member. That hands-on experience inspired her to pursue a career in nursing.

Parrish enrolled and took her prerequisite courses through Blackhawk Community College in Moline, and then transferred to Trinity College of Nursing & Health Sciences, where she completed her bachelor's degree in nursing. She expressed gratitude for the support she had from family and others while she was attending school, as working towards a nursing degree can be very challenging. She started working for UnityPoint Health Trinity Rock Island as a patient tech on the 7th floor while she was completing her degree at Trinity College of Nursing & Health Sciences. As of this summer, Parrish has worked for UnityPoint Health Trinity Rock Island for six years, with five years under her belt as a registered nurse.

When asked what her favorite part of the job was, she responded, "I just really enjoy being able to provide comfort to people." She acknowledged that being at the hospital is very typical and routine for her, but it's not a typical setting for her patients. "It's just nice to be able to be a comfort or just somebody that makes them feel a little bit better about them being there when they really don't want to be." Parrish demonstrates amazing patient-centered care and has a great desire to help where she

“Kelsey is one of the most compassionate nurses that I have had the privilege to not only work with but also be trained by.”



is needed. This is something that seems to come naturally to her.

Parrish's nominator said, "Kelsey is one of the most compassionate nurses that I have had the privilege to not only work with but also be trained by. She is always putting her patients first. She provides a comfortable atmosphere with her kindness and knowledge. She is always willing to help fellow nurses and patients out despite having a large workload. She remains positive, calm, and resilient with every workday. Kelsey is a true leader in patient care and yet remains so humble."

When asked what ideas she thinks are important to pass down to nurses that she trains, she stated, "I think it's just important to remember that this is not an everyday thing for people, so no matter what, just do your best for the patients that you have, and then as well as the people that you work with because, you know, the day can only be as good as you and your attitude, and your attitude with other people. Even when it's hard, it's just really good to be supportive to them and to persevere no matter what." This is a great philosophy to uphold in a position where you can really influence someone's outlook and hospital experience.

She was surprised and honored to be nominated for the work she does. Parrish acknowledged the entire nursing community in this area, as well as her coworkers. She explained, "There are a lot more people that deserve to be recognized for the type of nurse and person that they are. I'm sure only so many people get nominated, but I just think, I work with a lot of great people and have worked with a lot of great people, and I'm just appreciative of them. I think a lot more people deserve to be recognized for what they do and the work that they do." She expressed her humble nature and positive attitude while acknowledging the work that other area nurses and her team of coworkers do.

STINA TERRONEZ

RN

UnityPoint Trinity Bettendorf BirthPlace

KRISTIN DEMARR

Stina Terronez had never envisioned herself becoming a nurse, and now she is a 2023 Heart of Healthcare honoree; a surprise she was not expecting. “It definitely caught me off guard,” she said. Terronez is a Labor and Delivery Nurse at UnityPoint Trinity Bettendorf BirthPlace. She is from the south side of Chicago, and met her husband, a Mo-line native, while they were in college. Her time studying nursing was far from an ordinary experience. She said, “The nursing school was interesting because I was surrounded by people who had wanted to be nurses their entire lives, who came from generations of nurses. And I was like, 34 or 35 years old and kind of starting off and finding out that this is something that I wanted to do later in life, so very unique.” Stina was in school during the pandemic, which posed challenges because the programs weren’t allowing students to go into the hospital. She missed out on the opportunity to have a lot of the hands-on experience that students usually receive.

The inspiration behind her career choice is what she is constantly reminded of when on the job and helping patients. Stina’s delivery experiences led her to become a labor and delivery nurse. Her first son was born in 2014 at the very hospital she works at. “Back in 2014, I had my son there. I had a bit of a scary delivery. It wasn’t the beautiful, you know, kind of story that I try to give my patients. It was kind of a scary event for me. I had amazing nurses who did everything that they could to make a scary thing not so scary for me, and I am to this day, very, very grateful for all of the care and support that I had there, and encouragement. When I had my second son, two years later, and I was able to have a VBAC [Vaginal Birth After Cesarean], which was my goal the second after I had my first,” she explained.

She talked about her second delivery, “And that was also a very scary thing because I was doing something for the first time with this lingering fear of failure in the back of my head. And there were times where I did not think I was going to do it, where I completely doubted myself, and they believed in me. The nurses were, like ‘You can do it.’ ‘You’re doing it.’ And I did it. That birth was the



most redeeming moment of my entire life and I do not think that I would have been able to do it without the support of those nurses. Because I believed that they do this day in and day out, and I told myself ‘They know what they’re doing, they see this all the time. If they think I can do it. I can do it.’ And I did it. It was

amazing.”

Those nurses who championed Stina and helped her believe in herself, were the very inspiration that led her on a journey to do that for other women. “I wanted to be that person. I wanted to help them find their strengths. I decided to go into nursing. And now here

I am. I get to work on the unit where it all began” she stated. To be a labor and delivery nurse in the very unit that led to this choice in career is something very special for Terronez. She got emotional when she talked about when she first started working there. The room that she had been in for her delivery, room 204, was right across from the nurse’s station. “Every morning when I used to come into work, I would tap the little number sign and just be thankful that I could be here for somebody else. And I do that every day, and I look at that room, and even on those hard days, it’s a constant reminder of why I’m doing what I’m doing.”

She explained some of the challenges in labor and delivery, “Everybody tends to think ‘Oh you hold babies all day. It’s all cute and lovely and everybody’s happy’ and that is what we are a lot of the time, but there is a lot of heartbreak. You know, not every story comes out picture-perfect here. And some stories do end in tragedy. And it’s hard as a nurse to not take bad situations personally. We do everything that we can, but there are things that we cannot control. But when it’s your patient and something bad happens, you do dwell on it and you think ‘What could I have done better,’ ‘If I had done this, what would have happened?’ And that’s probably the hardest thing because you find your vulnerable hours with a patient and you build relationships, and a lot of the time these babies are born and I almost feel like the aunt, like, I have a vested interest in this baby. I’ve made friends with the patients, and those 12 hours feel like 12 years sometimes with some patients where you just feel like you’re part of their little family for a small moment in time.”

Terronez talked about the team of nurses she has worked with. She said “Everybody is so helpful, so willing to teach, so willing to mentor, and I’ve been very lucky.” She explained that she took some of the roses that were given to her as an honoree and wrote little notes on them and gave them to some of her co-workers. She stated, “Nursing is a team sport!” Her nursing team has shown her how to be a good nurse, and she states, “If I’m a wonderful nurse, it’s only because people have shown me how to do that.”

SEPTEMBER CARLSTEN

RN

Outpatient Care Center at Genesis East

KRISTIN DEMARR

September Carlsten's husband, Davenport Fire Chief Michael Carlsten, gets his name in the paper a lot, but this time, she is being honored for the care she gives to patients and her team as the charge nurse in the Outpatient Care Center at Genesis East.

Carlsten, a Quad Cities Iowa native, has always loved taking care of people. She ran an in-home daycare, but when her stepson, at age three, was diagnosed with leukemia and was being cared for at St. Jude's in Memphis, the nurses that helped her family inspired her. She stated, "The doctors that we had were wonderful, wonderful Doctors. They were the best of the best, but for us, it was the nurses that put things into layman's terms and were there to comfort us and let us know really what was going on." As a mother, she wanted to do something where she knew she could take care of her children. Carlsten is a mother of six and now a grandmother to several, with a new grandchild due to arrive in June!

The Outpatient Care Center is in charge of all of the scheduled and same-day surgeries at Genesis East, so any surgery at Genesis East will start with Carlsten's team. She said that even when patients come in for a surgery that they are looking forward to, there is always some anxiety. She said, "Just being able to be there for the patients and being able to comfort them before they go back to surgery, and reassure them that things are going to be OK. And to let them know that they've got a great team that's going to be taking care of them, and just ease their anxiety a little bit before they go to surgery is really the best part of my job."

Carlsten enjoys working with patients, but being a charge nurse means that she doesn't always get to work with patients as often. She states, "I kind of take care of the doctors and the nurses now. I do the assignments for the nurses and just kind of help put fires out when we have patients that are added on. I work them into our schedule. I do a lot of the behind-the-scenes stuff too, and just being there as a support for our nurses so that they can get their job done." A typical day for Carlsten includes anything and everything that anyone needs help with, from helping physicians get orders in, to jumping in and helping patients get ready, whether the



schedule is running ahead or behind. She tries to keep everything running smoothly.

Carlsten has been in the Outpatient Care Center for eight years, but she has been a nurse almost eighteen years now. She explained, "When I first started, I started out on the cardiac intervention unit. I worked there for about eight years, and then ended up taking a job that was actually part of the IT department. I was called a Physician Liaison. I trained physicians on computer order entry (CPOE) when we first switched to that, and then just kind of worked with them to get their orders set up and worked directly with the physicians at that point. I did that job for about two years, and then I came to outpatient." Having that computer background

and experience working with physicians, she is the person that they go to for help when they have computer issues.

When asked what her favorite part of the job was, Carlsten reiterated what she said earlier when asked what the most important part of her job was, that easing a patient's anxiety was at the top of her list. "I think being there to be a backup for everybody. I mean, like I said, my favorite part, honestly, is when I'm caring for patients or, just rounding on patients and helping ease their minds before they go to surgery. I've had surgery before, and I knew the team that was taking care of me, and even knowing the people that were going to be caring for me, there was still a great deal of anxiety just from the un-

known, you know, having to have surgery. You never know what's going to happen. And I think just being able to be there for those patients to help ease their anxiety a little bit before they have to go back."

Carlsten's nominator stated that she is "Patient-Centered every patient-every day. September gives 110% to her patients and to her team every day. She goes the extra mile to make sure her patients are comfortable and cared for like they were her own family, and truly makes a connection with them. Her team is her 2nd family- no job is too big or too small for her to jump in and assist when she sees a teammate in need of assistance or knows it will be a challenging day. September is a true blessing to nursing and to Genesis!"

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BRITTANY DYKES

RN

Genesis East ICU

KRISTIN DEMARR

Brittany Dykes, a registered nurse at Genesis East ICU, got an incredible surprise when friends came all the way from Milwaukee, WI to witness her become a 2023 Heart of Healthcare honoree.

When asked why she decided on nursing, she stated, "I just wanted to make a difference in my community and nursing really made me feel wholesome, and it was something that I could do to give back. I've always loved people and working with people and it's just something that I can give back to my community. I find a lot of gratitude, and you know, it humbles me."

Dykes' nominator was a family member of a patient who recalls the experience they had under Brittany's care, "From the time Brittany started her shift Friday afternoon, she kept me up to date. But beyond the technical aspects, Brittany went above and beyond in my opinion as she cared for our father, our family, and in particular, the care she provided me."

Once the doctor informed me that he didn't think Dad would make it till morning. I contacted family as far as Minneapolis and Branson, and it was Brittany that helped to get those family members into the ICU that night, brought them up to speed as they arrived, enabling them to accept that it was time to say their final goodbyes.

When the time came that I had to sign the paperwork to shift Dad's treatment to comfort care, knowing that this was the end even though there were still family that had not arrived, it was Brittany, standing there giving me the strength and support so I could do the right thing. About an hour later, when my sister arrived, Brittany walked through all the steps that had been taken and gave my sister the peace of mind that dad had done everything he could to hold on for her, but in the end, he passed peacefully.

Then, with tears in her eyes, she looked at my family members and said, 'Your family is so lucky. This room was filled with love the entire night.' She didn't have to share these words, but they will be cherished by

“The people that you trench with, AKA my nurse buddies, they really get you through some really tough times. Specifically going through COVID. That was a mental challenge.”



our family.

Dad would not have wanted it any other way and for her to affirm that experience meant the world to us. Brittany was a shining star on one of the most difficult nights of our lives. I can't express enough to you how fortunate Genesis is to have Brittany on the ICU team, what an exceptional job she did that night, and maybe more importantly, her willingness to go above and beyond just doing her job and instead being simply an outstanding human being to our entire family."

Being an ICU nurse can be demanding. When asked about how she deals with the challenging aspects of the job, Dykes stated, "Lots of good friends and really great coworkers." She explained that she tries not to take it home because other people don't really understand what nurses go through. She said, "The people that you trench with, AKA my nurse buddies, they really get you through some really tough times. Specifically going through COVID. That was a mental challenge. So, I think that just leaning on them because they know what it's like and the patients that we take care of, and the high acuity, and sometimes the outcomes are not as expected. And you know really, hugging your nurse friend is great."

Her favorite part of the job is helping people. She said, "I like helping people. I also like educating. So, when patients don't understand why they're taking a certain medication or why we're doing a certain treatment, I just want to give them the information. I want them to have the best information. So that way they can make the best decision for them."

Dykes expressed her gratitude for her team of nurses. She stated, "I just want people to know that it takes a village. And what I mean by that is, I know that I am being awarded such a great honor, but I couldn't have done it alone. I've had a lot of really great preceptors and a lot of really great coworkers to really help me through, and educate me, and help me to be able to coach and be the best nurse that I can be. So, I really just want to thank them for everything."

KATY DETMER

RN

Neuro-Oncology unit at Genesis East

KRISTIN DEMARR

Katy Detmer is a Registered Nurse in the Neuro-Oncology unit at Genesis East. Working in this unit can be very challenging. Detmer stated, "I have a lot of people that come in and have some of the worst news they've ever heard in their life. They come in for a cough or a cold, which they think is minor, and then find out that they have cancer everywhere." She goes on to say, "It's rewarding. It is difficult. Don't get me wrong, but it is rewarding." Detmer enjoys helping others through some of their toughest times.

Detmer is the youngest of three children. She explains that she's not comfortable in the spotlight. She explained, "I grew up in a family where we're just very humble people. I enjoy what I do. I do not like spotlight stuff." Her family moved from Nebraska to Blue Grass, Iowa in 1995. She moved to Davenport within the last three years so that she could be closer to the hospital and her job. She originally started out seeking a degree in criminal justice. Detmer said, "I was actually a criminal justice major before this. I came from a family of military police and RNs and I got into my third year as a criminal justice major and decided that there was a whole lot of black and white and that I thought was gray area. I got back into nursing." With Detmer's deep caring of people and taking care of them along with first-hand experience with the healthcare system the choice was then easy. The two experiences that impacted her were her brother being born five months prematurely and legally blind. The other significant impact was the opportunity to be part of Lifeflight.

When asked what her favorite part of the job was, she shared, "Honestly, the patient interaction, I kind of miss that. I was a CNA and CMA for about 12 years before I ended up coming back to nursing to do my RN. It kind of stinks that we don't have as much time to sit and talk and just let them talk about events, or whatever the case may be. We just physically do not have the time to do that. And I know that the last three years have not been easy as far as the pandemic, and across the United States everyone is short-

staffed, and hospitals will always be short-staffed. Medical staff will always be short-staffed, but it's not being able to give them just a little bit of leeway."

When asked how she deals with some of the more challenging aspects of the job, Detmer stated, "Honestly, in the last year, strokes always happen, cancer always happens. I have gotten into a couple of situations where I have recognized names on the board. I would get into the chart real quick to see if age and stuff match to let the charge know. 'Hey, this is somebody that I know. I'm just going to warn you in advance. I'm going to go in and introduce myself, let them know that I would be their primary nurse, and if they're uncomfortable with me being their primary nurse since we know each other that I would move them to a different nurse, and I would take somebody else.' Thus far I haven't had any issues. Everyone has said that they were comfortable with having me as their nurse, but it's still just giving them just a little bit."

Detmer's nominator shared the experience they had with her, "Katy gave me hope when I had none."

I had been in a medically induced coma in ICU due to persistent seizures. When I was transferred, she went out of her way to ensure I was progressing. She even helped me eat (even after her shift was over) and encouraged me to push myself. I had lost the ability to walk and stand. I couldn't feed or bathe myself. I had to relearn it all. She encouraged me and never gave up. She kept her word. She is a huge reason I fully recovered. She wouldn't let me stop fighting.

Seeing her face was the highlight of my day. She was the only one who could really talk me into pushing myself to build strength. She goes above and beyond. She went out of her way to encourage me. She gave me the power I didn't know I had. Without her, I genuinely don't believe I would have made the recovery I did, at least not nearly as fast.

She deserves this award more than anyone I know. With a chronic illness, I am frequently in and out of the hospital. There have been amazing nurses, but none compare to Katy."



JOEL MOORE

RN

Chief Nursing Officer of Genesis Medical Center, Davenport

KRISTIN DEMARR

Joel Moore is the Chief Nursing Officer of Genesis Medical Center, Davenport. He has oversight of all the nurses for both Genesis East and Genesis West Campuses. He says, “Every day is a new adventure.” He’s been a nurse for twenty-four years and has been with Genesis for the past eight years. He was born at St. Luke’s Hospital, and grew up in Bettendorf. He loves that he was born in the hospital system that he works in, “I now get to be the chief nursing officer at one of our predecessor organizations,” he said.

When asked why he chose nursing, Moore stated, “Nursing is actually my second career. My first degree was a bachelor’s in psychology, and I worked in the mental health field right out of college. I discovered quickly that was just not for me. I had been encouraged in my undergraduate studies by the Chair of the Nursing Department to kind of explore nursing. When I was in the behavioral health field, and wanted out, I thought ‘I’m gonna give nursing a try.’ And I fell in love with it. The more I think about it, nursing is more of a calling to me than an occupation. It just aligns with my core values, and it’s a way that I get to serve people and serve my community. So I guess I don’t know if I chose nursing or if nursing chose me.”

The idea that nursing aligns with Moore’s core values is demonstrated through his nomination. His nominator said, “I’d like to nominate Joel Moore as an outstanding nurse of 2023. I’ve yet to find a person more caring and concerned for those that he works with both professionally and personally. In addition, Joel has a growth mindset, continuing to expand his knowledge base through graduate level courses at Iowa so he can be a better nurse, a better leader, and a better caretaker for those that he works with. This while he is also a caretaker for his parents, especially his mother who passed away this past year. In addition to Joel’s dedication to care at Genesis, he’s active in his community through civic organizations (Quad-City Times Bix 7 and SCRA), and community service through church (grief support). He’s a friend to many, offering a helping hand or lending a listening ear. He and his dog Benjamin reside in Davenport.”

When asked if he thought his time and experience in behavior health lent itself to his nursing career, Moore said, “I have



a really diverse background. I worked in nursing for 10 years. At the bedside, in-home care, and intensive care unit; in a variety of locations. Then I stepped away from nursing and went to work at Saint Paul Lutheran in Davenport in Parish Ministry. I was their Director of Educa-

tion, and at the core of every nurse is an educator. So, that was a really great fit for me. My six years at Saint Paul were really helpful in building my leadership skills, as well as cultivating my love for people. I think my time in Parish Ministry has really shaped me more than behavioral health.”

He went on to say, “We’re all about people and nurses have to know how to talk to people and care for people and adapt to adversity. Every person comes into our care with a different story, so we have to be able to respond no matter what we bring to the table. I’m just doing what I do because I love it. The reason I’m here is to help other people be better, and this is whether that’s through their health or through their mind, or their spirit. That’s just what I’m here for.”

When asked what his favorite part of the job was, Moore stated, “I have a dynamic, committed, engaged leadership team that I work with every day. We joke, but I think it’s worthy of touting about, is that we call our nursing leadership team The Genesis Dream Team. Every day, I’m just so grateful for the team of leaders that really are at the forefront of managing the people that take care of the people. Their job is the hardest job. Middle management is so hard. Because they are on 24/7, and they’re responding to staff members calling in or developing the skills of the new workforce, so they have a really tough job, but they’re just an amazing team. That is definitely at the top of the list.”

Moore also talked about the challenges in the nursing field post-COVID and how nurses are still picking up the pieces. He talked about how twenty years ago, a nursing crisis was averted, but now there is another nursing shortage. Not only a shortage of nurses, but also a shortage of nursing professors. He said, “We’re in the post-COVID era and still trying to figure out our new identity as nurses, and the workforce is different. The Gen. Z workforce that has entered in this post-COVID era are really interesting people, and I’m trying to learn from them so that we can decide what direction we’re headed.”

Moore was surprised to be honored as a 2023 Heart of Healthcare honoree. He said, “I’m honored to be nominated. I think that every nurse who is at the bedside is more worthy than me because they are the ones that are the heart and the hands for our patients that are vulnerable and coming to our institutions for care. So, I’m just really humbled, and I just want to make sure I get a shout-out to the people that are at the bedside. They are the heart of healthcare. I mean, I’m honored and humbled and it’s really cool as a leader to be nominated for something like this.”

KEESHA CAUSEMAKER

NP

UnityPoint Trinity Rock Island

KRISTIN DEMARR

Keesha Causemaker, a neonatal nurse practitioner at UnityPoint Trinity Rock Island, was on spring break with her family in Chicago and had no idea she had been nominated for the 2023 Heart of Healthcare. Her department educator sent her a link to the Quad-City Times newspaper nomination. “I sat down. I was floored! I was very shocked actually!”

Causemaker, who grew up in Williamsburg, Iowa, started off on a medical route and was taking her pre-med courses when she obtained her EMT Basic to work part-time on an ambulance. As part of the requirements to obtain the certificate to become an EMT Basic, she had to spend some time in the emergency room. The nurses there recognized her skills in helping the patients and encouraged her to pursue her degree in nursing. She stated, “I got to talking with the nurses, and a lot of them were like ‘I think you would do much better at the bedside as a nurse than a doctor just by your demeanor and how you are.’ They said ‘Nothing against physicians, but just the way you are with people and patients, I just think you’d be much happier.’ And I did love the bedside. I loved learning about patients and being with them, and being able to spend that time with them, so that’s what prompted me. I actually just applied to nursing school on a whim, and was thinking ‘If I get in, I’ll go. And if I don’t, that’s OK too. It’s not the path that’s been chosen for me.’ I applied to the University of Iowa for their nursing program, and I got in, and the rest is history.”

Being a neonatal nurse practitioner has its rewards and challenges. When asked what her favorite part of the job was, Causemaker stated, “Definitely what I do with the babies. I love the challenge because, of course, my patients can’t talk to me, so I get the challenge of trying to figure out what’s going on with the baby and how to fix them just by how they interact with us in the ways that babies do. So that’s very intriguing to me. I love having the dynamic of the parents involved as well. When it comes to my position, I don’t just care for the baby. It’s my main target and my main goal to have the baby there in my care, but they come as a complete family unit most of the time with others involved. So, I get a full spectrum of care, every-

where from babies to siblings to parents across the board. That’s the part of the job that I love the most. I get to interact and be with people at some of the hardest times of their lives based on what’s going on with their infants, and I get to be with them at one of the most amazing times of their life, bringing a new life into their world.”

She recognized her team of co-workers and others that are involved in the care of patients. They are some of the important people that help support her through the challenging times. She stated, “I have a great provider group that I work with; nurse practitioners and physicians that have all done this for a very long time. So, lots of years of training behind us. They’re fantastic to lean on when the times get really hard. We talk through things, we go over the scenario ‘What happened? What may have gone right or wrong?’ And they’ve always been a great support for me. My family as well are a great support. They’re always there to provide me with support with whatever I need. So that’s a really big one too.”

Causemaker explains how her job is really all about the entire team that she works with. She stated, “It’s really just working with a great set of individuals. Everybody makes it a team effort and we really focus on not only what’s going on at work, but then the mental health of the providers as well when things like that happen.”

Causemaker’s nominator stated that she “is educated and experienced to supervise and assist with the delivery of infants and treatments that may follow delivery. But more importantly, she is a healthcare professional who cares! She is passionate and driven as well as compassionate and kind—her family, friends, co-workers, and especially her patients know this to be true. Whether it is delivering a breakfast pizza, telling you to breathe, or being a shoulder to cry on—she is there, at any hour of the day or night—and that is all before her skilled ability to keep your baby alive. Her genuine love to help others paired with years of education and experience makes her an invaluable member of the neonatal team and the Quad City community!”

“I’m just really thrilled that this is what I get to do every day when I go to work,” said Causemaker.



ANITRA JOHNSON

RN

Unity Point Health Center For Alcohol Drug Services (CADS) in Rock Island

KRISTIN DEMARR

Anitra Johnson has been a nurse for twenty years, and she was “Super, super, super excited” to have this honor bestowed upon her. She’s been acknowledged in the past, but nothing like this honor. She said, “You’re told that you’re doing a good job. But I’ve never had anything of this magnitude, so I’m just extremely grateful for the opportunity to be a nominee. I’m seriously just blown away by it.” She was an LPN for the first thirteen years of her career, and then she finished her Registered Nurse degree in 2015. She currently works as a Methadone Nurse, where she gives medication-assisted treatment (MAT) at the Unity Point Health Center For Alcohol Drug Services (CADS) in Rock Island.

Johnson’s nominator had this to say about her, “Anitra has been a nurse at the Methadone Clinic in Rock Island for almost 7 years now. She is a compassionate person who makes all of the clients feel heard and respected. She always lets them know how proud of them she is and that the team supports their recovery. She talks with them about their accomplishments and their struggles, and she forms strong positive bonds with them. She is a great nurse, a great person, and a strong advocate for recovery.”

Anitra explains that her job isn’t just handing out medication, “We offer counseling, and any other therapeutic techniques to keep our patients on the right path, and how to deal with their substance abuse disorder. That’s basically what I do.” She goes on to explain what is involved in helping people with the medication, “I give this medication daily to them and I assess them to make sure they are able to take their dose, and make sure that they have not used any opiates. I watch them drink it. I ask them how they’re feeling after they take the medication, and the most important question I ask is if they feel that the current dose that they’re on is effective. Because the methadone does work, it keeps them from experiencing cravings and any signs of withdrawal. It does work, but we just have to get them up to that therapeutic dose.”

Johnson has always been a caretaker. When she was twenty years old, she was granted legal custody of her younger brother and sister, who were five and

“It’s not always serious at the window and just getting to know them, knowing about their children, and what their goals are, what they’re pursuing now that they’re on their path of being sober. I just really enjoy them.”



six years old at that time. What really inspired her to become a nurse, was the help and care she received from a nurse named Carol at St. Luke’s Hospital (now known as Genesis West). Johnson stated, “She just sat down with me a couple of times, and just talked to me. And she listened to me, and she listened to all my fears. But the most important thing to me is that she was nonjudgmental. She lis-

tened, and she was sympathetic, and she was empathetic. I feel like I’ve tried to model myself after how she treated me, to be all that I could be for my patients and the clients that I serve. So yeah, she really made a huge impact and I’ll never forget that.”

Johnson took her experience, and the lessons she learned, and translated them into what she does for her clients

at CADS. She stated, “I’m not a bedside nurse. I’m just a nurse at a window, but I think my job, the most important aspect is to just be nonjudgmental and to be empathetic to them, to put myself in their shoes, you know, because you hear stories, and you understand the people. They have lapses, and that’s understood. But let’s not make them feel bad about it, or about themselves. So, just keep boosting them up. Let them know that they can do this. That they can get better. And most of our clients are actually out here living their lives because of this medication. They’re out here working, they’re enjoying their family, they’re enjoying being out in the community now because of this clinic. So yeah. It’s very rewarding.”

When asked what her favorite part of the job was, Johnson said, “My favorite part would probably have to be laughing and joking with the clients. It’s not always serious at the window and just getting to know them, knowing about their children, and what their goals are, what they’re pursuing now that they’re on their path of being sober. I just really enjoy them. It’s just me. I’m the only nurse in the building, and I work with other counselors and staff, but I’m the only nurse there. So, 90% of my interaction is with the clients. I enjoy them.” She explained that when you work alone, you have to be motivated, and a self-starter.

Johnson talked about how much she loves doing what she does and loves caring for her patients and clients. She said, “I still love being a nurse. Even if I went from just passing medication to just being there for patients and clients, even if just to hold their hands. We’re still nurses, and I just love every aspect of it. I really do. Even when I was LPN, I did long-term care. I loved working with the elderly. It’s a really good job to have, and I think anyone that cares about people, I really feel that they should become a nurse. I’m so serious.”

Johnson was born and raised in the Quad Cities and has no plans to ever leave the area. She stated, “I’ve been at CADS for seven years, and Unity Point took over a couple of years ago. It has not been a bad thing at all. I really perceive myself retiring from my job duty that I’m doing right now, and from Unity Point, that’s how much I love it there.”

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STEFANIE STICKROD

RN

Director of Nursing for Community Health Care, Inc.

KRISTIN DEMARR

Stefanie Stickrod is the Director of Nursing for Community Health Care, Inc. Stickrod's parents are originally from the Quad Cities area, but they had relocated to California before she was born. She grew up in California, but once she graduated from high school, she moved here to be closer to the majority of her family. She has gone back and forth a couple of times, but she is settling in and happily establishing roots in the area.

She has been a nurse for eighteen years. She started at Scott Community College, received her bachelor's degree from the University of Phoenix, and then her Master's degree from Western Governors University. While she was working on her master's degree, she decided to take the pathway of leadership and management.

Stickrod was inspired by the midwife that helped her deliver her first child. She stated, "What really made me want to be a nurse was my midwife when I was pregnant with my daughter, my first child. It was just a really great experience, and I really loved how my midwife made that connection with me and made what could have been a very scary experience, a very positive, rewarding one."

Stickrod's nominator talked about how much she has accomplished and how much work she has put in within her position at Community Health Care, Inc. "Stefanie is a nurse, mentor, and leader for CHC, Inc. She was on the front lines of our pandemic response, led the development of Express Same Day clinics, helped establish an immigrant/refugee clinic and set up homebased care for home bound patients. She is a mentor to our nursing leaders, working with her team to develop a Nursing Skills day that ensures our teams are trained to deliver the best care to every patient, every time. Stefanie is a model for "What Right Looks Like" in health care!" She started working for CHC three years ago, just before the pandemic. She talked about how innovative CHC is and how they never closed and were able to transition to seeing patients on the curbside, drive-thru, and virtually. She said, "It was a very interesting onboarding experience, but so great. It was so rewarding. Patients were just so grateful that we were still seeing people and helping get them what they needed."

Stickrod talked a little bit about her



history in nursing, as well as her experience at CHC specifically. She said, "I've worked at hospitals and long-term acute care facilities and skilled nursing. I've worked at really great facilities, but this one [CHC] in particular, it's just very

mission-driven and we are just really here for our patients, the community, and just the patients that are the most vulnerable and that need the most from healthcare. We're making sure that we're doing everything we can to get them what they

need."

When asked what she felt the most important part of her job was, she stated, "There's so many it's hard to pick just one thing, but I really am an advocate for our nurses. I give them a voice whenever. Maybe there's a process that we could be doing better. I'm just making sure that it goes all the way to the top and that those concerns are addressed and that we're making change, and we're providing the best care possible to our patients."

Community Health Care, Inc. has done a lot and offers a lot of services between their multiple clinics in the Quad Cities and surrounding areas. Instead of talking about her own accomplishments, Stickrod explained how excited she is about some of the amazing and innovative programs and services that CHC offers to the community. She said, "We provide lots of different service lines. We have primary care, dental, behavioral health, women's health, and OBGYN. We also have school-based health, so we're actually going into some of the schools and providing annual physicals for the kids who miss those deadlines. We also have an outreach program. We're out at different areas in the community helping our homeless population." Another service that she's very excited about is the program they are doing with refugees. She stated, "We've collaborated with World Relief and the Rock Island County Health Department. There are a lot of refugees that are coming to our area that really need primary care. They are coming from areas where they never had that before. A lot of our providers are very passionate about this population. We have an RN specific for this role. We've all been working together on building what that role needs to look like and developing a process for that." They get them immunized, registered with primary care, and send out referrals when needed.

Stickrod stated that everything that has been accomplished is due to the entire team of people that she works with. She said, "Just being nominated was really an honor, even being considered for being nominated. That was just really rewarding in itself. It's an honor to be recognized for the work, and I cannot take credit for all this work. It's definitely everybody at Community Healthcare that plays a part in all the things that we do."



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