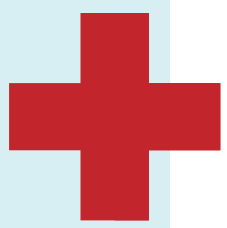


# Thanks, Nurses!



We appreciate  
healthcare heroes  
like you!



*"Being a nurse means to hold all your own tears and start drawing smiles on people's faces." - Dana Basem*

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The Pampa News



Pampa Regional  
Medical Center



***Nurses, thank you for all that you do for  
our families and our community!***

# Nurses in Small Towns: The Unsung Heroes of Our Healthcare System

By **CALEB DORN**  
pampanewseditor@gmail.com

Nurses play a vital role in our society, and nowhere is their contribution more important than in small towns. These dedicated professionals provide essential care and support to patients in their homes, clinics, and hospitals, often going above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that everyone receives the care they need.

Small towns face unique challenges when it comes to healthcare, with limited resources and a high demand for services. Nurses are

often the backbone of the healthcare system in these communities, providing everything from basic care to complex medical treatments. They work tirelessly to ensure that patients are comfortable, safe, and well-informed about their health and wellbeing.

Nurses in small towns also play an important role in building relationships with patients and their families. They are often familiar faces in the community, and their compassion and dedication to their work inspire trust and confidence in those they serve. This sense of community is vital

in small towns, where everyone knows everyone, and patients often rely on their healthcare providers for emotional support as well as medical care.

In conclusion, nurses are a critical part of our healthcare system, and their contribution to society cannot be overstated. In small towns, they are especially important, providing essential care and support to patients and their families. So, to all the nurses out there, thank you for your dedication, your compassion, and your unwavering commitment to our health and wellbeing.

Nurses play a cru-

cial role in providing care for patients not only in hospitals but also in nursing homes and home health care settings. In these environments, nurses often serve as primary caregivers and provide personalized attention and support to patients who require long-term care.

At nursing homes, nurses work alongside other healthcare professionals to provide medical care and daily living support to residents. They are responsible for administering medications, managing chronic conditions, and monitoring vital signs, among other tasks. Beyond these clinical re-

sponsibilities, they also play an essential role in the emotional wellbeing of residents by providing companionship, counseling, and support to residents and their families.

In home health care settings, nurses work with patients who require ongoing medical care but prefer to receive it in the comfort of their own homes. They help patients manage their conditions, provide education and guidance on self-care, and communicate with other healthcare providers to coordinate care. They also provide emotional support and compan-

ionship, helping patients and their families navigate the challenges of living with a chronic condition.

In conclusion, nurses at nursing homes and home health care settings are an essential part of our healthcare system. They provide high-quality, personalized care to patients who require long-term care, often going above and beyond to ensure their patients' comfort and well-being. These nurses are truly the unsung heroes of our healthcare system, and we owe them our gratitude and respect for the critical work they do every day.

## Nicholas Garcia, LVN.



Nicholas Garcia, LVN.

By **VALERIE GRAY**

pampanewsreporter@gmail.com

Nicholas Garcia is a Licensed Practical Nurse who works for Children's Home Healthcare and Aveanna Healthcare. With over 5 years of nursing experience, Garcia provides quality home healthcare to patients in Pampa and the surrounding areas.

Garcia attended the Rural Nursing Education Consortium at Frank Phillips College and graduated in 2018. During his clinicals, Garcia was offered a job at an Obstetrics & Gynecology clinic in Borger. Once he graduated, Garcia switched to career paths to home healthcare.

Garcia gave insight as to why he pursued a career in the nursing industry.

"My sister was a nurse, my brother is now a nurse, my other sister is a nurse, and my brother's wife is a nurse," Garcia said. "The interest of going into nursing was only natural."

In his line of work, Garcia's responsibilities center around total patient

care. During each shift, Garcia oversees and attends to the care of all needs of his patients. This can range from any therapy needs, cleaning up the patient's room, or ordering their medication.

Garcia offers his advice to people who are interested in joining the nursing industry.

"In nursing, if you don't like one thing, there is always another," Garcia said. "There's a million different niches for nurses. You can do pediatric care, dialysis care, or travel care. You can work in hospitals, doctor's offices, be a school nurse, basically anything."

Garcia expresses his appreciation to those who have helped him in his career.

"I would like to thank my wife, Karolina," Garcia said. "She took care of everything at home while I went to school. I'm very appreciative of her."

## PROUD OF OUR NURSES

<p><b>Connie Baten, RN</b> Hospice Director</p>	<p><b>Pam Dalton, RN</b> Home Health Director</p>	<p><b>Alisha Bliss, RN</b> Home Health</p>	
<p><b>Gail Bush, LVN</b> Hospice</p>	<p><b>Karina Cabrales, RN</b> Hospice</p>	<p><b>Pam Crain, RN</b> Home Health</p>	
<p><b>Jonna Jones, RN</b> Hospice</p>	<p><b>Nicole Judd, RN</b> Hospice</p>	<p><b>Megan Mojica, RN</b> Hospice</p>	
<p><b>Anita Myers, LVN</b> Home Health</p>	<p><b>Dusti Ott, LVN</b> Hospice</p>	<p><b>Brittany Robbins, LVN</b> Home Health</p>	<p><b>Maria Soto, LVN</b> Home Health</p>

# THANK YOU, OUR NURSES!

Jeanine Malone, FNP-C | Ramie Malone, FNP-C | Beverly Stephenson, FNP-C

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## Heather Kidd - Community Service Manager at the Meredith Place

who live here - our residents - this is their home. We are guests in their home," Kidd said. "We want to treat our residents the way we want us and our family to be treated. Even though the weekend or a holiday is coming up, our residents are here. They are always here. It's not a job that one can clock in and clock out from."

Kidd went on to explain a personal benefit of working at the Meredith Place.

"This is definitely my favorite nursing job that I ever had. We build a bond with these people that you cannot put a price tag on," Kidd said. "You become close with them and they become close with us and our family."

In addition to the bonds formed with the residents, Kidd acknowledges the hardest part of her job: the loss of life.

"The biggest challenge that I have is becoming attached to our residents," Kidd said. "We do deal with death. They live here through their end of life stage and by far the hardest part is losing my residents."

In working with residents who are living out their golden years, Kidd highlights the rewarding parts that come with the nature of her job.

"The most rewarding part is making a difference in the residences' lives," Kidd said "One resident who moved in here said, 'I'm coming here to die. I don't want to live anymore. I have no purpose in life.' Now, he comes into my office almost every single day and says, 'You might as well mark me off that death list because I am living ten more years at the least. He loves it here. You can really see the difference you're making in the residences' lives.'"

Kidd offers her advice to people interested in pursuing a career in the nursing industry.

"Nursing is not just a job. It's not something that you can sign up for and get a good paycheck. You have to dedicate a lot of time and heart into it and make sure this is truly the field for you," Kidd said. "It's not just a clock-in and clock-out job. You worry about your residents or patients all the time. Yes, nursing is something that needs to have a work-life balance, but it is not something that you can step away from until you come back to work."

Kidd offers a unique perspective on the difference in the work environment between a hospital and Meredith Place.

"I loved working in the hospital but that environment is entirely different. You see patients for a short time and then you're on to the next one. You typically don't find out what happened to them. Here at Meredith Place, it's different. You

**KIDD** cont. on page 6



Submitted Photo

**From left to right:** Kellie Cummings, Executive Director, and Heather Kidd, Community Services Manager at Meredith Place.

**BY VALERIE GRAY**

pampanewsreporter@gmail.com

For ten years, Pampa local Heather Kidd has dedicated her life to aiding the health of patients and residents as a nurse.

Kidd, a mother of two wonderful children, has worked in Home Healthcare, in the Operating Room at Pampa Regional Medical Center, and now at Meredith Place as the Community Services Manager.

Kidd's responsibilities are to maintain the quality of life for the residents. By overseeing the residents' medications, coordinating care with their physicians, and attending to any concerns the residents may have, Kidd delivers high-quality service in home healthcare.

Kidd commented on the unique position she and the other healthcare workers are in when working at Meredith Place.

"In this community, we really become like a family to the residents," Kidd said. "It doesn't feel like a job, it feels like these are my family. I worry about them on my days off, on weekends, and at night."

When hiring new staff, Kidd shares an essential perspective each healthcare worker must keep in mind.

"We tell our staff that the people

dents, and their family. We need to get back to the bedside, back to customer service, and back to getting to know the people we treat. That is what we are here for - the patient, the resident, and their family."

Cummings reminisced about one specific mentor who had a significant impact on her career.

"I met Jeanine Malone, now the Nurse Practitioner at Harvester Health Clinic when I was doing my clinicals. I wasn't even out of clinicals yet and she gave me my very first job," Cummings said. "She and PRMC offered me a position at the hospital before I even graduated. Jeanine pushed me to go beyond because she knew what I could bring to the nursing field. Because of her and her continued support, it is why I continue to keep pushing myself and continue on my nursing career."

Cummings expressed her gratitude for the support of the Physicians at PRMC and her mother.

"The physicians at PRMC - Dr. Hinshaw, Dr. Grabato, Dr. Hampton, Dr. Smith - all saw what I have and pushed me to be the best version of myself," Cummings said. "Also, ultimately, my mom. She has since passed but she always pushed me and kept me going."

For more information about Meredith Place, contact (806) 419-4442 or visit 812 W. 25th Ave.

## Kellie Cummings - Executive Director of the Meredith Place

**BY VALERIE GRAY**

pampanewsreporter@gmail.com

Pampa local Kellie Cummings is the new Executive Director of Meredith Place. With 17 years of nursing experience and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from the University of Texas in Arlington, Cummings has made a name for herself in the Pampa nursing community.

Prior to working at the assisted living community, Cummings worked at Pampa Regional Medical Center in the Operating Room, Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory, and Case Management department.

As executive director for Meredith Place, Cummings is responsible for managing the financial, staffing, and overall well-being of the residents.

Cummings explained her reasoning for transitioning from a hospital work environment to a live-in care work environment.

"On top of seeking a better work-life balance, I am still attending the University of Texas in Arlington to achieve my master's," Cummings said. "My degree specializes in Gerontology. Taking on this role at Meredith Place works well with my degree."

Cummings went on to highlight the enjoyment she receives working at the assisted living community.

"I love it. I tell everybody - Enlivant is a great company, but they're not the ones who did it for me," Cummings said. "Even before I took the job, I came and toured the facility. I met all the residents and their families. It was beautiful to see them all and how they were thriving. That is why I took the job."

Going from a fast-paced hospital environment where situations change regularly, Cummings finds the work environment at Meredith Place to be well-balanced.

"I have more work balance. I can focus on the residents, what I can do for them that day, and not be torn away from my work," Cummings said.

Cummings mentioned the progress she has made in her nursing career.

"For 17 years, I've had tremendous rewarding experiences everywhere I worked. Now, I feel the focus has shifted to the direction of where my career is taking me," Cummings said. "Working here and everything leading up to this shows me the direction I need to continue in."

As for her advice to prospective nurses, Cummings mentioned key principles to keep in mind.

"Do it but make sure you're doing it for the right reason. In healthcare, we are here for patient care," Cummings said. "Unfortunately with covid, it changed the nursing environment a lot. We need to get back to where we were pre-covid. We need to focus on our patients, our resi-

# Thank you to all our nurses!



# We appreciate all you do



WE APPRECIATE YOU.

# HAPPY NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

You are our country's honor.  
Thanks for everything!



# Nurse G, Taking Care of the Kiddos



Tamara Gutierrez, Pampa ISD Head Nurse

BY CALEB DORN

pampanewseditor@gmail.com

Pampa born and raised, Tamara Gutierrez serves as the Pampa ISD head nurse, and has done so for the last 17 years. In addition to her work with the schools, Gutierrez works at Golden Plains Hospital in Borger

working in the labor & delivery. Her career in nursing spans over 25 years, working in different fields and different levels of nursing. Gutierrez received her bachelor in nursing, and pursued her career in nursing after aiding a family member.

"No one in my family had ever worked in the healthcare field before me," Gutierrez said. "I kind of went into nursing because it was always something in the back of my mind, but my father was really ill with cancer when I had just started out. Helping him and being that caring person in his life is what really decided my decision and helped me find my calling."

A mother of three, with three grandbabies, Gutierrez also wears the hat of MiMi.

"The grandbabies are the best,"

Gutierrez said. "I would've had them first. They call me MiMi because I'm not a grandma."

One of Gutierrez' daughters is a nurse, following in the foot steps of hers.

"When I went to school, I was a single mom, and a lot of the time I spent studying or doing school work, we did at the table together," Gutierrez said. "I'd do my work and my kids would color or pass the time, but my oldest daughter told me in elementary school she wanted to be anything but a nurse because of all the reading. So once she grew up and went into nursing, watching her working in labor and delivery, which is something that is a big passion of mine, it was a very proud momma moment. She is 10x the nurse I was then, her heart and compassion show."

Her calling for helping others brought her into the field, but Gutierrez has a fond passion for what she does.

"The best part is the way people view me, I'm viewed as a caregiver," Gutierrez said. "I like being able to help people, or being the person that people can lean on or call for

help. It's what makes my job enjoyable for me."

As the district nurse, Gutierrez oversees all the schools within PISD with six nurses on her staff. Before joining the school, Gutierrez worked on the hospital side of nursing, similar in job titles, but different in the work.

"A school setting is a lot more emotional and mental," Gutierrez said. "Working in a hospital is more physical, you have a patient for a few days and that's it. With the school setting, you know these kiddos for a long time, and you get to know their families at the same time."

Throughout her career as a nurse, Gutierrez has met many different nurses that have helped push her on.

"When I first started, I didn't have family to push me on or know anyone else," Gutierrez said. "But once I got started I met a lot of wonderful nurses that really encouraged me and helped me keep going. They molded me into the nurse I am today."

The mentors along the way that have helped, and Gutierrez wanted to thank personally are, June Spangler, Yvette Cuellar, Kristi Harden and Jeanine Malone.

## Riley Elliff

BY CALEB DORN

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Riley Elliff is a 2020 Pampa High School graduate. After graduating, she went to AC for her nursing degree. Officially becoming an LVN in December of 2021, and began working as a floor nurse on med-surge in January of the following year. At 20 years old, Elliff was working as a full-time nurse at BSA. But has since returned to school to further her degree. Being a 3rd generation nurse, Elliff has a lot of reasons for nursing, her biggest one is? Her grandmother.

"My Nana and mom are both nurses, so when I was young I'd always visit my Nana at the hospital," Elliff said. "I got to visit older people on home health visits, and I just loved the people and getting to help."

An inherited job, Elliff started working in the field at a young age.

"I was really worried when I first started, that I was going to do something wrong," Elliff said. "I just didn't want to mess anything up. But I loved it. Working the night shift was my favorite."

After working for BSA for a year, Elliff returned to school while continuing to work in home health for pediatrics.

"I loved being an LVN, but an RN is what I want to do for right now," Elliff said. "As an

LVN I know how to do the work of an RN so it was just a matter of time."

But the schooling won't stop there. Elliff is weighing her options of specializing in mental health or nursery.

"If I went into mental health, I don't think I'd continue into schooling," Elliff said. "But if the nursery is the path I choose, I'll go back. I still haven't decided."

With two options on the table, Elliff also has considered going further for school to teach.

"I have so much to decide, I don't know what I want to do," Elliff said. "There are so many options."

In her short time working in a hospital and home health, the good and bad times have shown.

"After starting I realized that nursing is about having a heart for people," Elliff said. "You have to care for your patients, going to school I realized you find out quickly if it's for you. The hardest part for me comes from a direct experience. Working at BSA in the dialysis area, a lot of people come in that are undocumented and they can't get the help they need outside of the hospital and it was the worst thing to know that you can't help them more. I lost a patient from that and it was really hard."



Submitted Photo  
Riley Elliff and her grandmother

While working in home health and doing schooling, Elliff will also spend her summer working as a nurse for a summer camp.

"I think it will be a cool experience," Elliff said. "I still haven't decided what I want to do, so working at a camp with just kids will be super helpful in helping me find my path."

## Darla Watson, Simulation Lab Coordinator - Clarendon College



Submitted Photo

Darla Watson, Simulation Lab Coordinator

BY VALERIE GRAY  
pampanewsreporter@gmail.com

Darla Watson is the Simulation Lab Coordinator and member of the Allied Health Faculty at Clarendon College.

After obtaining her nursing license in 1994 and her bachelor's degree in 2016, Watson went to Clarendon College to fulfill her core course requirements.

Watson spoke highly about the opportunities Clarendon College provides.

"It's very affordable. We're huge proponents of students getting their secondary education locally and moving up from there," Watson said. "Allied Health has an agreement with West Texas A&M University and Texas Tech University. If students choose to pursue a higher degree of education, then all of their credits will transfer to those universities. Anything that they do here can move them forward over there."

Watson has been working at Clarendon College since September 2017. As the Simulation Lab Coordinator of Pampa and Childress, Watson maintains the essential training equipment and classroom area for students to safely practice nursing responsibilities.

"In the sim lab, students get to make mistakes, learn from them, and do better," Watson said. "We have simulators that can emulate the human body in which students can practice drawing blood, needle insertion, and analyzing breathing patterns."

In addition to her duties as the sim. lab coordinator, Watson does substitute for other instructors when necessary and partakes in License Voca-

tional Nurse and Registered Nurse Clinicals.

"I do like to go to clinical. It's a better hands-on experience for the students as they can go to different sites in the community," Watson said. "All of the community has been really good and accepting of our students. We go to the home health agencies, doctor's offices, and the hospital. The staff and patients all welcome us in. We are very thankful for them."

Watson offers her advice for those who are interested in pursuing a career in the nursing industry.

"If you have a passion or desire to take care of people, nursing can be your future," Watson said. "If you have a passion for maintaining healthy lifestyles or helping people get better, nursing is definitely a path that you would enjoy."

WATSON cont. on page 6



Carmen Krutson

Happy  
National  
Nurses Day

Thank you for all you do!

Love,

Your Family at Bob Douthit Autos





Submitted Photo

**From left to right:** Amanda Dalrymple, Brenda McCullough, Rosa Estrada, and Kristi Harden.

## Kristi Harden, APRN, FNP-C

**By CALEB DORN**

pampanewseditor@gmail.com

Harden is a Pampa native, after graduating from Pampa High School she attended WTAMU where she received her bachelor's in nursing. She is a mother of two, but her career in nursing spans many years and many different occupations.

"I started as a CNA the semester before graduating college," Harden said. "I worked as an RN in labor and delivery and newborn for 12 years before working in the occupational health field."

Harden served as the occupational health nurse for Celanese and Chevron-Phillips for 10 years before returning to the hospital.

"The part I loved about that job was promoting health to the employees," Harden said. "It's all about making sure the employees are healthy and taken care of before they do their

work."

After her kids were grown, Harden went back to schooling through Texas Tech to get her degree to become a family nurse practitioner. With 30 years in the field, it's no surprise Harden has found her calling.

"I love my job, to do this job you have to just care about people and want to help," Harden said. "When I was younger I had this doctor's kit, and I loved pretending to be a doctor, so from a young age I knew I liked caring for people."

From her family, Harden's grandmother was also a nurse. But even while in school, she was unsure of what she wanted to do.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do or what degree I wanted to pursue," Harden said. "I had enough credits to graduate but I still wasn't sure what I wanted to do. I decided to take general studies and just take the

classes that interested me. At the end of that year, I still wasn't satisfied, so I talked with a nursing advisor and come to find out that the courses I'd taken throughout the year were all the nursing prerequisites. So it was just meant to be."

Harden will now reach the milestone of her newest role as a nurse practitioner for three years. After waiting to further her career, the time to do so finally came.

"I knew I wanted to wait until my kids were grown because I couldn't have done it," Harden said. "My husband and I have a family business and I wasn't working a full job so I had a lot of free time. I didn't know what I wanted to do with the time I had. I knew some people in school for the same thing, so I began talking to them about it and asking questions. I decided that it was the right time, and applied. I was wor-

ried at first because I hadn't been in school for so long, so I didn't know if it would even happen. But within a few weeks of praying and just asking if it was meant to be then let it happen, I got accepted."

30 years in the field, and working many different levels of healthcare, it's easy to assume Harden has seen a lot. While the career is something she'd never change or give up, it isn't always easy.

"I would say the best part, as a family nurse practitioner is seeing an entire family. I love the newborns, it's my favorite part," Harden said. "There are newborns that I started seeing and have now grown and I still get to see them. The hardest part for me is having to tell a patient when they have something terminal and you have to be the one to break the news. It's never easy, and

**HARDEN** cont. on page 6

## Amanda Dalrymple

**By CALEB DORN**

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Amanda has worked in healthcare for over a decade, serving as a CNA for 10 years, before passing her nurse boards in 2019. In her time as a CNA she worked in home health, private care, and med-surge at PRMC.

"I became a CNA to pay my bills, but then I felt the calling," Dalrymple said. "I went to nursing school, and it wasn't an easy road. There were road blocks but there were a lot of people pushing me along."

Before moving to PRMC, Dalrymple worked at Meredith Place and Caprock Nursing.

"The hardest part about working in a nursing

home, is that sometimes you're the only person they see everyday," Dalrymple said.

But working in a hospital has it's own set of positives and negatives.

"The best part is getting to help people," Dalrymple said. "Being a nurse reminds me of all the good in the world, despite what's going on outside in the world. I love my job, but serving my patients the best we can is sometimes difficult when we have to deal with insurance. We get road blocked from doing what's best without any good reasons."

Being a nurse isn't just taking care of the patients, it's also a lot of navigating and finding ways to get the help patients need.

"Our nurses take on that role of searching and

fighting with insurance to take the best care of their patients," Director of Medical Group Operations, Jenifer Richards said. "They do whatever they have to do to make sure our patients get what they need. They don't get enough credit."

Amanda's path to nursing was met with failures or hard times, but throughout it, she had those beside her to push her along. From a unique background of getting into the field, Amanda shares the advice she's taken to heart.

"If you want to do this job, or you keep getting hit with hard times, just know that God's timing is everything," Dalrymple said. "If you want to do something, and you are truly meant to do it, don't ever give up on it."

## Brenda McCullough

**By CALEB DORN**

pampanewseditor@gmail.com

Brenda McCullough is a mother of three, growing up between Pampa and Miami. McCullough has been in healthcare for 38 years, and a nurse practitioner for 23 years.

"My mom always wanted to be a nurse but never got the chance to go to college," McCullough said. "So I went to school to be a nurse and she told me that my degree was also hers. Which was okay with me, I'll share that with her."

The decision to become a nurse practitioner after McCullough had been a nurse for 15 years came from a friend that was going into school for it and told her to come along.

"The best part of being a nurse practitioner is great, you get to see everything," McCullough said. "As a family nurse practitioner you get to see all ages and all illnesses."

The best part of the job, noted by McCullough is the trust the patients put in

her and her team.

"I have the best patients in the world, I get to know them and everything about them," McCullough said. "They invite you in to be part of their life and just trust you. They could go anywhere in town or in the world for help, but they come to me which just shows that trust they have in me. But of course there isn't always a good side to it, for me the hardest part is losing patients. I've connected with them and feel that loss when they go, you get invited to the funerals and can't make them all and it's something that'll never get easier for me."

Over her career, McCullough's biggest person to thank is her mom.

"My mom had a hard life, she never got to go to college," McCullough said. "She pushed me and was my encouragement to go, and my father, smartest man I knew, he never reached the goals he wanted to but my siblings and I have, and we have them to thank for that."

**MCCULLOUGH** cont. on page 6

## Rose Estrada

**By CALEB DORN**

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Rosa Estrada is, as referred to by staff, Brenda McCullough's right hand man, the number one person Estrada gives thanks to. Estrada has been in the healthcare field for 20 years, serving the team as a CNA. A mother of three, Estrada has a compassion for helping others. Her job title goes beyond what she does, often times she is the beacon of hope for patients that don't speak English.

"We see a lot of patients that don't speak English," Estrada said. "A lot of Medicare patients, and Hispanic patients. I get to help them more than anyone else."

Estrada has been working in her field since she was 18 years old. Her reasoning for joining the healthcare field, was to help people. The first in her family to go into the field, setting the tone.

"The best part about my job, and why I got into it, is to help others," Estrada said. "Some patients come here without anyone or just to see someone to visit with. The hardest part is also seeing the ones that have no one. Getting to be that person for them, is what makes my job so special."

Estrada's advice to those interested in going into the field? "Do it because you want to help people," Estrada said. "Don't go into it just because of the money, do it because you have the heart. I have patients daily thank me for what I do, but that's the reward that comes with the job."

## Harden

Continued From Page 5

it never gets easier.”

Throughout her career, there have been many people to thank over the years. From the very beginning to now.

“From the very beginning, I commuted to WT with some amazing women. Sara Wheeley was one of those that I have to thank,” Harden said. “Tammy O’Neal is one that I worked with at the hospital and she was so encouraging and supportive in everything I did. Now as a nurse practitioner,

I have to thank Brenda McCullough for all the help and guidance she’s given me.”

Harden’s advice to those considering? Start young.

“If you know what you want to do, start young,” Harden said. “I wouldn’t change my career or life for the world, but I sometimes wish I would’ve done it sooner. I admire the ones that have it figured out so young.”

## Watson

Continued From Page 4

Watson expressed her thanks to a peer of hers that has been a consistent part of her career.

“Our Interim Director is Sherrie Denham and she is one of my very best friends,” Watson said. “I got to know her while working here and I admire her a lot. She’s really great with the students and she has a lot of knowledge to share.”

As well, Watson thanks her family for the support she has received.

“I thank my family because if it wasn’t for them, I wouldn’t have made it through school,” Watson said. “Having a dedicated support system has made all the difference.”

For more information about the Allied Health program at Clarendon College, call (806) 660-2014 or email [nursing@clarendoncollege.edu](mailto:nursing@clarendoncollege.edu).

## Kidd

Continued From Page 3

get to see the residents grow and thrive every single day.”

Kidd expresses her deepest gratitude for the support she received throughout her career.

“I would thank my family. My mom has been such a huge, huge, huge support,” Kidd said. “My kids have gone through this journey with me and I am thankful for that. I am thankful for all of my family’s support.”

## McCullough

Continued From Page 5

The unsung heroes of the medical field are the nurses and nurse practitioners that keep the hospitals going. The staff and the bonds they have are what allow them to help.

“A big support for me is Rosa [Estrada],” McCullough said. “I’ve known her since she started out and we’ve worked together ever since. She is the right hand I need to work, when she’s gone everyone asks where Rosa is. She is so important to what I do.”

# How communities can honor local nurses



The stress associated with the nursing profession has been well documented. A 2022 study published in the journal BMC Nursing found that job stress not only has an adverse effect on nurses’ health, but also may reduce performance and quality of care, potentially affecting the outcome of patients.

There’s no denying nurses have a lot of weight on their shoulders. That reality underscores the importance of letting nurses know how much they’re appreciated. Community leaders can consider these ideas as they look for ways to honor local nurses.

- Recognize nurses at public events. Parades, high school sporting events, holiday tree lighting ceremonies, and other community-centric events draw large crowds. That makes these events the perfect time to honor local nurses and emphasize all the work they do to help their neighbors. Ask a local nurse or two to serve as grand marshal(s)

in a holiday parade and/or let local nurses flip the switch at a tree lighting ceremony. Community dignitaries like a mayor or local police chief can explain who the honoree is once the crowd gathers.

- Support a nursing charity. A community-wide campaign to support a charity that benefits nurses or causes important to nurses can be a great way to thank them for all they do. Various domestic and international organizations are linked to the nursing profession. Prior to introducing a campaign, community leaders can speak with local nurses to see if there is any specific charity or cause important to them. Some charities may provide job training in communities where nursing shortages have made it hard for locals to access quality health care, while others may finance health care operations, including staffing of nurses, in underprivileged countries.

- Publicize and support efforts to improve on-

the-job safety for nurses. The American Nurses Association noted that nurses were forced to re-use masks or purchase their own safety equipment during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Communities that want to express their appreciation for nurses can support efforts to ensure working conditions are safe for nurses and that nurses don’t need to reach into their own pockets in an effort to avoid illness.

- Embrace public health efforts. One of the most effective ways to honor local nurses is to take a little off their professional plate. Community leaders can urge residents to get their annual flu shots and update other vaccinations in an effort to keep hospital admissions low, which in turn makes nurses’ jobs easier.

Nurses are worthy of praise. Communities can do much to show these invaluable health care professionals how much their efforts and sacrifices are appreciated.

# How to determine if nursing is right for you

Nursing is a popular career choice. With strong job security and the potential for growth, it is no wonder nursing draws such interest. In 2021, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated there would be about 203,200 openings for registered nurses each year for the next decade. And employment of registered nurses is expected to grow by 6 percent between 2021 and 2031.

A strong job outlook and competitive pay (nurses earn median salaries of \$77,600 as of May 2021) appeals to any aspiring professional, but a career in nursing is about more than opportunity and compensation. Individuals considering nursing need to determine if the field might be the right fit for them. It’s not always glamorous being a nurse. In fact, it can be quite challenging and often stressful. However, the rewards tend to outshine the trials and tribulations. The following are some components of nursing that can help individuals determine if the field is right for them.

### • Training time constraints

There are different levels of nursing, each of which requires a different amount of training and certification, according to Nurse Money Talk. A certified nursing assistant must complete a program at a specific CNA vocational school, and such programs run between four and 10 months, on average. Licenced vocational nurses can expect to study for 12 to 18 months, and must pass the NCLEX-PN licensing exam. Registered nurses will need two to four years of schooling and are expected to earn an associate’s degree or bachelor’s degree. Aspiring RNs also will need a passing grade on the NCLEX-RN licensing exam. Most nurses will have to complete clinicals to showcase skills in real life situations.

### • Flexibility

Nurses need to be adaptable and flexible. Shifts may not be consistent and the demands of the job may differ from day to day, even though there may be some overlap. If challenging new experiences come easy to you or if you have the flexibility to work different shifts rather than a set schedule, then nursing could be a good option.

### • Problem-solver and critical thinker

Although nurses are part of a larger health care team and may need to

leave certain decisions to physicians, there are plenty of critical decisions and think-on-your-feet actions that may need to be taken to ensure patient health. It is essential for nurses to keep their emotions in check so they can think clearly in stressful situations.

### • Good communicator

Nurses must be able to speak and interact with doctors and others in a clinical setting, but also communicate effectively with patients who may not fully understand all of the medical jargon nor what is happening to them. Nursing requires social skills and an ability to pivot between many different roles - all the while adjusting communication tactics depending on the audience.

### • Organized and diligent

There isn’t too much room for mistakes in health care, which means nurses will need to maintain their attention to detail; otherwise, they could subject patients to injury or even death.

In addition to these traits, good nurses should have compassion for patients. A desire to help others during difficult times compels many people to become a nurse.





# National NURSES WEEK

MAY 6-12

Whether at home, at school or in a hospital setting, **nurses** play a vital role in health care. We are very fortunate to have so many fine **nurses** in the area, and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for everyting. Together with physicians, you are the **pulse** of our **health care system**.



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# Pathways to Success

## ALLIED HEALTH



### STEP ONE

#### *Entrance Requirements*

- High School Diploma, GED or Ability to Benefit Test



### STEP TWO

#### *Introduction to Nursing*

- One Semester Program, includes CPR Certification
- CNA testing available on completion



### STEP THREE

#### *Vocational Nurse*

- One Year Program, 48 credit hours

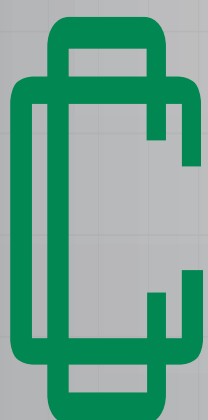
### STEP FOUR

#### *Registered Nurse*

- One Year Program, 39 credit hours



For more information about the pathways in Allied Health, please email: [nursing@clarendoncollege.edu](mailto:nursing@clarendoncollege.edu).



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