

# THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into health care



**Alicia Mueller, MSN, RN, CHSE**  
NURSE EDUCATOR, SIMULATION LAB INSTRUCTOR

Alicia Mueller, who is a nurse educator and simulation lab instructor, never imagined she would be working in health care.

After high school, Mueller attended college to become a math teacher and track coach — her original goal in life. However, she learned teaching positions in her community were hard to find at that time.

**“I switched to nursing because of job stability and because it incorporated my interests in math, science and education,”** Mueller said. **“My grandma and aunt were also nurses, so I do have family members who have worked in health care.”**

After receiving her bachelor’s degree in nursing from Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois, Mueller accepted an antepartum, postpartum nurse position at Rush Copley Medical Center in Aurora, Illinois. She later moved back to Nebraska, where she began working with Columbus Community Hospital as an acute care unit/intensive care unit nurse in November 2008 before accepting the position of nurse mentor in 2011.

Mueller has been working with simulation education since 2012. During this time,

she transitioned from diabetes education to nursing education in February 2018.

**“I did not imagine I would end up being a nurse educator,”** Mueller said. **“However, education has always interested me, so being able to incorporate both nursing and education into my career has been a blessing.”**

Mueller said she loves the day-to-day variation she receives with the nursing education team. Within her position, Mueller teaches various classes for hospital staff, assists with the coordination of patient education and facilitates simulation scenarios for hospital staff, college students and community members.

Mueller said she is thankful for the hospital’s support throughout her education journey.

**“The hospital greatly supported me in my work by allowing me to use resources, such as the increased access to technology, while I was working on my Master of Science in Nursing Education,”** she said.

Since completing her master’s degree, she said the hospital has continued to support

her growth through additional certifications and annual conferences.

**“The part of health care that I believe is the most rewarding is watching the growth of those around you — patients, students or co-workers,”** she said.

Mueller said she is grateful she chose to pursue a career in health care because it allowed her the opportunity to meet and positively influence other people’s lives.

**“A career in health care can be exciting, because it offers a wide variety of opportunities and is ever-changing,”** she said.

**To learn more about nursing at Columbus Community Hospital, visit our website at [www.columbushosp.org](http://www.columbushosp.org).**