

THE Importance of **Caring**

SEPTEMBER 2022

my journey into volunteering



Perah Connelly

VOLUNTEEN

There is a common saying: **“Like mother, like daughter.”** If you visit Columbus General Surgery, you’ll find mother and daughter hard at work in the clinic.

Perah Connelly’s mother, Jolene, started with Columbus Community Hospital part time as a transcription processor in the evenings. However, in January 2020, she began working as a receptionist with Columbus General Surgery. Connelly said her mom’s medical work sparked her interest in health care.

“I would watch my mom work from home in the evenings for the hospital,” she said. **“I knew the work she was doing was rewarding. So, adding that with my love for science, I knew there was a place for me in health care.”**

The Monroe native decided to learn more about the hospital’s VolunTEEN program. Connelly met with the program’s representatives and worked to find an area of interest that would provide her with real-world, hands-on health care experience.

Connelly’s interests took her to Columbus General Surgery, where she started working as a VolunTEEN in November 2021.

“I decided to become a VolunTEEN at the hospital because I am interested in the medical field, and I want to make a positive impact on the community,” she said.

After school, she arrives at the clinic, where she helps the staff make reminder calls, prepares folders for upcoming appointments and helps the clinic’s nurses complete various tasks. But overall, she said, her favorite experience has been observing two procedures — a port removal and a skin lesion.

Like many hospital VolunTEENS, Connelly’s experience with Columbus General Surgery solidified her decision to pursue a career in health care.

“I have learned so many lessons on what it’s like working in a medical environment,” she said. **“The doctors and nurses have been excellent in teaching me and answering my questions.”**

When Connelly is not busy with school or helping at the clinic, she is a kennel worker for a local veterinarian clinic. She also volunteers at her church, assisting with music, visual projection and youth

classes. She enjoys playing the violin and flute and reading, and is part of the color guard at Columbus High School.

As Connelly enters her junior year of high school and her second year as a VolunTEEN, she said she is glad she got involved with the program because it has opened up various learning opportunities for her.

“I would encourage other students to learn more about the program,” she said. **“Being a VolunTEEN is a great experience, and you learn a lot.”**

Connelly looks forward to continuing her volunteer work and expanding her experiences in the health care field. Following graduation, she plans to attend a four-year university with the hopes of studying medicine and pediatrics.

To learn more about the VolunTEEN program or other volunteer opportunities available at the hospital, visit columbushosp.org.