

THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into health care



Zachary Kavan

DIRECTOR OF MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

Zachary Kavan didn't plan on a career in health care even though it ran in the family.

“My mother, sister and brother are all involved in health care on the clinical side, so it's always been in my blood,” Kavan said. **“Unfortunately, a clinical occupation was not in the cards once I discovered my aversion to needles.”**

But, Kavan took the long way around to a career in health care anyway.

Kavan is now director of materials management at Columbus Community Hospital (CCH), but he started off his career in broadcasting. His bachelor's degree was in broadcast journalism and his first job out of college was at KOLN/KGIN in Lincoln as a part-time creative specialist/production assistant.

“Somehow, I parlayed that degree – don't ask me how – into transportation and logistics and became a facility manager for a biomed company called Stericycle, which is a vendor for health care facilities,” Kavan said.

At the time, Kavan was also pursuing a master's degree in business. Once Kavan finished that degree, he started as director of materials management at CCH in February 2011.

In his position, Kavan administers buying decisions, sets policies for managing the supply chain, builds relationships with

vendors, leads contract negotiations for fair pricing and analyzes the hospital's usage/purchase history to determine the facility's needs. Kavan does all of this to help reduce the hospital's supply costs and increase efficiencies. He also manages the housekeeping and linen teams to ensure facility cleanliness and infection control.

“No day is ever the same,” Kavan said. **“One day I'm a firefighter, helping solve problems that need immediate attention. The next day I may be an analyst reviewing usage, price and terms/conditions for potential contract negotiations. Another day I might spend working on efficiency and standardization projects...It changes constantly, which is one of the reasons I keep coming back every day.”**

Though Kavan didn't plan on a career in health care, he's glad that's where he ended up because he loves his job and he loves working at CCH.

“Columbus Community Hospital has been generous with its support,” he said. **“The hospital encourages professional and personal staff growth, and backs it up by providing opportunities through external or internal educational conferences.”**

Thanks to the support of CCH leadership, Kavan has been able to attend multiple

educational conferences like American College of Healthcare Executives, Studer, LEAN, Vizient, Negotiation Tactics, and the Emerging Leader Symposium.

These were all valuable learning opportunities, but one of the most important things Kavan learned about health care was simply that he had a place in it.

“While working at Stericycle, I was exposed to several supporting departments within health care facilities across the state,” Kavan said. **“I had the opportunity to discover, that while not directly involved in patient care, there were other areas in health care where my skillset would be able to assist. Even though I cannot help patients directly, I can help the clinicians who do.”**

Kavan said that there is a place in health care for everyone – no matter their skillset.

“We need great accountants, maintenance engineers, data analysts, IT professionals, risk managers, human resources staff, marketing staff, lab technicians and many, many more,” he said. **“If you have a desire to help people, don't let a fear of needles, or anything else stop you from looking at the vast amount of careers in health care.”**

For more information on CCH and the talented staff members who help it provide high quality health care, visit our website at www.columbushosp.org.