

THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into nursing



Julie Vance, MSN, APRN, AGCNS-BC, RN, NREMT

NURSE EDUCATOR/SIMULATION LAB COORDINATOR/BLS, ACLS,
 PALS COORDINATOR/HOUSE SUPERVISOR

Over the years, Julie Vance has served in a variety of positions in health care and she currently serves in many roles at Columbus Community Hospital (CCH).

Since 2011, Vance has served as a nurse educator; simulation lab coordinator; Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) coordinator; and house supervisor at CCH.

But Vance didn't always plan on going into health care – in fact, she used to think she wouldn't be a good fit in the field.

"I did not think I could pursue a career in health care since I was that person who passed out at the sight of blood," she said.

But all of that changed when Vance's father had a stroke when he was 54 years old and she was just 18.

"Through all the rehabilitation and exposure to the health care environment, I decided I wanted to take care of people. I could do this," she said. **"I was determined to make lives better and create environments to motivate people to want to get better."**

Though Vance had initially been interested in a career in elementary education, she decided to change her college major.

"I changed my major to nursing and have never regretted it a day since...My current position in nursing is the best of both worlds because I love to teach and I love nursing. I started out with wanting to

obtain an education degree and now I am lucky enough to teach nursing," she said.

Vance gets to put her education background to work as she teaches BLS, ACLS and PALS courses, as well as, critical care, rhythms and pharmacology classes, Trauma Nursing Core Courses (TNCC) and Emergency Nursing Pediatric Courses (ENPC). In her role as simulation lab coordinator, Vance also gets to design and implement simulations in the hospital's simulation lab which give CCH staff realistic training in a risk-free environment. Plus, as a house supervisor, Vance is able to coach and mentor staff.

Each of these roles appeals to Vance's love of teaching and her own love of learning.

"I am definitely what one would call a lifelong learner," she said. **"I love to learn along with teach, coach and mentor."**

Vance has demonstrated her commitment to learning by continually exploring new areas of nursing.

She started out in the health care field as a medication aid in 1993, got her associate's degree in nursing and became a registered nurse in May 1997, and started working at CCH in January 1998. Vance has worked as a staff nurse in Acute Care, Intensive Care and as a charge nurse. She has served as a house supervisor since the role was implemented at CCH and also served as the Joint Commission and hospital safety coordinator.

"As mentors have shaped my career, I have been nudged into roles to enhance my exposure and experience and grow as

an individual...All of these exposures and experiences helped me to grow and be able to complete the different roles I currently possess," she said.

Throughout her nursing career, Vance has also continued her education so she was able to fill new roles.

In May 2010, Vance got her bachelor's degree in nursing and two years later, when an opportunity to work in the simulation lab came up, Vance got a graduate certificate in simulation education. She also obtained a master's degree in May 2018 as an advanced practice registered nurse as an adult-gerontology clinical nurse specialist with a nurse educator track option. In addition to these degree courses, Vance has also taken leadership and coronary classes.

She said that CCH has been very supportive of her continued education, through their loan forgiveness and tuition reimbursement programs, as well as their commitment to fostering a learning environment.

Vance encourages anyone who is interested in a career in health care to learn as much about it as they can and explore several areas of the field like she did.

"Exposing yourself to the environment will help you to make sure your decision is a solid and lifelong, sustaining decision," she said. **"Always choose what you love and you will never have to work a day in your life."**

For more information on CCH and its dedicated employees like Vance, visit www.columbushosp.org.