

THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into health care



Dani Bayer, RN, BSN
 REGISTERED NURSE

The path to a long-term career isn't always direct. Dani Bayer, RN, BSN, said she took the long way to find her place in health care, but she's glad she landed at Columbus Community Hospital. She worked as a bartender, waitress, housekeeper, certified nursing assistant (CNA) and pharmacy technician before becoming a nurse.

"I feel like nursing is a great combination of serving others while incorporating my interests in science, continued education and pharmacy," she said. **"It helps me work in various settings and offers flexibility within my career."**

Ever since she was young, Bayer's parents inspired her by modeling a life of purpose. She said she learned the importance of a positive attitude and a fun-loving spirit from her mother, who was a nurse for 40 years. At the same time, she said her father remained active in the community and demonstrated the importance of connection and service.

After high school, the Columbus native moved to Kearney, Nebraska, until nursing school brought her home.

Bayer received her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from the University

of Nebraska Medical Center's northern division in Norfolk, Nebraska. She completed her clinical rotations and externship at Columbus Community Hospital during this time. She also participated in a nursing student exchange in Shanghai, China.

After graduating in 2015, Bayer returned to Columbus Community Hospital, accepted a position as a CNA, and currently works as a registered nurse in the hospital's acute care unit (ACU) and Surge Center.

"Although CCH was the closest hospital to home, I liked its teamwork and culture and the idea of serving the community I grew up in," she said.

As a nurse with the ACU, Bayer is responsible for assessing and caring for patients of many different ages, illnesses and health care concerns. While in the Surge Center, she cares for patients recovering from orthopedic joint surgery.

"There is not a typical day, but generally, we have a huddle in the morning and are assigned to an area of patients to care for that day," she said. **"Our role is fluid as patients are admitted and dismissed at different times."**

Bayer is thankful for the hospital's support and encouragement regarding continuing education and areas outside of nursing. Over the years, she has served on the hospital's steering council, unit-based council, Advocacy Team, Team Steps and the Professional Development Program. Right now, she is working toward her Master of Science in Nursing degree and Master of Business Administration degree, and will graduate in December 2022.

"I think having a hospital that supports nursing and its staff so well is amazing," she said.

With the wide variety of health care opportunities available, Bayer encourages people interested in health care to explore the possibilities and find an area that interests them.

"Take advantage of shadowing opportunities and see what your ideal career is truly like," she said. **"Know that health care is not just nursing, physicians and direct patient care. So many other important roles are needed in the hospital — there is a place for you!"**

For more information on nursing services at Columbus Community Hospital, visit columbushosp.org.