

THE Importance of Caring

MAY 2022

my journey into health care



Heather Hrouda
 RESPIRATORY ASSISTANT

Years ago, if you had told Heather Hrouda she would end up working at Columbus Community Hospital, she would never have believed you. But after six years, she is proud to walk the halls of the same hospital that saved her life.

On Feb. 15, 2017, Hrouda prematurely gave birth to her son. CCH's staff members worked diligently to save both their lives, and after her son spent 100 days in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), he was cleared to go home.

“Before that experience, I had never seen the impact a health care team could have on a family, but every single person has a role,” she said. **“While Rusher and I were being cared for at the hospital, a security guard prayed with my husband. The significance of that moment stood out to me about the impact and culture at CCH.”**

After her son was born, Hrouda knew she needed a more meaningful career and wanted to be part of a team that saved lives. She decided to take a leap of faith and leave her full-time job as an office manager at Dynamic Life Physical Therapy to pursue an “as-needed” position with the hospital’s supplies, purchasing and distribution department (SPD) in 2018.

“Beginning in the SPD department was a great place to start because I worked as a messenger delivering mail to all the departments, and as a tech filling store rooms all over the hospital,” she said. **“I learned all the hospital’s ‘ins and outs’ and how it operated.”**

That spring, the hospital promoted its annual respiratory therapy scholarship and apprenticeship program, which allows the recipient to work in the respiratory department while attending school. The hospital awarded Hrouda with the scholarship, and she started work as a respiratory assistant in August 2019.

Currently, Hrouda works as a registered respiratory therapy assistant while attending respiratory care school online through Southeast Community College.

“God truly has a way of opening paths for you if you trust Him,” she said. **“I am currently working through my classes and plan to graduate in December 2022.”**

As a respiratory assistant, Hrouda assists the respiratory therapy team with conducting electrocardiograms (EKGs), managing sleep study appointments,

changing oxygen tanks, cleaning and assembling ventilators and BiPap machines, administering and reviewing patient charges and calibrating the pulmonary function test (PFT) machine.

“One of the things I love about my job is that every day is a surprise of events,” she said. **“Working in respiratory care, you get to be all over the hospital — you’re not just in one location. I get to be a part of every department.”**

Hrouda decided to start a career at the hospital because she wanted to be part of a team that saves lives, and she encourages anyone interested in helping people to do the same.

“If you desire to help people on a higher level, get involved with health care,” she said. **“You will be able to help people in a way you never thought you would!”**

For more information on CCH’s respiratory care department or other career opportunities at the hospital, visit www.columbushosp.org.