

THE Importance of Caring

JUNE 2020

my journey into nursing



Connie Coan, CNA

ACUTE CARE UNIT

Connie Coan, certified nursing assistant (CNA), was in her mid-30s when she decided to make a drastic career change and she's very glad she did.

Right out of high school Coan started working at a savings and loan as a teller. Over the years she rose through the ranks and eventually her position allowed her to travel a 10-state region and see a lot of the United States. But Coan felt something was missing.

"It's kind of like someone tapped on my shoulder and said, you know your parents aren't getting any younger. They're in their 70s. Let's work on life," she said.

Coan moved back to Columbus to care for her parents and took a CNA course to ensure she had the skills she needed to care for them well. She soon found being a CNA suited her and she got a job as a CNA at a local nursing home. In this position, she frequently picked up nursing home residents when they were discharged from Columbus Community Hospital.

In doing this, Coan became acquainted with several people at the hospital, in particular, Nicole Blaser, MSN, RN, CCH's director of quality and compliance/HIPAA privacy officer, and Lisa Backman,

LPN, CCH's accreditation and hospital safety coordinator. Blaser and Backman told Coan there was an open position for a CNA at the hospital and urged her to apply.

"These girls literally got me an application and they put it in my hand. I turned it in and I got hired," Coan said. **"So those girls were quite the driving forces to get me as part of their team and I have no regrets. It is the best thing I've ever done."**

Coan started working at CCH on July 14, 2003 and she's been with the hospital ever since. She is currently a CNA and unit secretary for the acute care unit. As a unit secretary, Coan puts together charts and as a CNA, she has implemented a nurse floor orientation. Her job as a CNA also allows her to provide direct patient care by helping patients with activities of daily living and simply being there for them when they need her.

"I have the opportunity to sit down and hold patients' hands. I love the quality time I get to spend with my patients," she said.

Coan also loves the fact her job allows her to train many CNAs and work frequently with CCH's teen volunteer program, VolunTEEN. In all of her work,

Coan said she has been very supported by her co-workers and CCH's leadership.

"They give you the tools you need to do your job and if you feel you have a need and you can show how the need is there, by golly you'll have it," she said.

Outside of work, Coan said her co-workers have also offered her tremendous support after she lost her mother, father and brother, and when last year's historic floods made it difficult for her to get to work from her farm outside of Columbus.

"I had a work family that supported me through those trials," Coan said. **"They make you feel like you are not alone. They truly are your family. They're just good people."**

Coan is thankful to work with the staff at CCH each day and grateful to Blaser and Backman for making her fill out that job application all those years ago.

"I wasn't looking for a job when I applied for this one. It came to me and it was the best move I ever made," she said.

For more information on Coan or the job opportunities available at CCH, visit www.columbushosp.org.