

THE Importance of Caring

MARCH 2019

my journey into health care



Denise K. Tomek, R.T. (R)(M)(QM) DIRECTOR OF DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING

Denise K. Tomek, R.T. (R)(M)(QM), knew she was destined for a career in health care; it ran in the family.

“My grandmother was a nurse and my mother was an EMT in Schuyler, so I grew up around two very strong women with medical backgrounds,” she said. **“I knew I wanted to do something in the medical profession.”**

Tomek is now the director of Diagnostic Imaging at Columbus Community Hospital (CCH), but she got her first experience with the field of radiology as a patient.

“After several trips to the X-ray department due to childhood injuries, I thought that radiology might be an interesting career,” Tomek said.

After shadowing the two radiologic technologists at Schuyler Hospital, Tomek knew for sure that radiology was the career field for her. She went on to get her associate’s degree in radiologic technology from Southeast Community College in Lincoln in 1986.

While in college, Tomek also worked as a secretary in the radiology department at St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center in Lincoln. During her senior year of college, Tomek was hired at St. Elizabeth’s as a student technician. She also did her clinical rotations at St. Elizabeth’s and was hired as a staff technologist there after graduation.

In 1989, Tomek moved to Columbus to be closer to her family in Schuyler. She was hired by CCH as a staff technologist that year and she has been with CCH ever since.

Through the years, Tomek has served as a staff technologist, assistant director and now director of Diagnostic Imaging at CCH. In that time, Tomek also got her bachelor degree from Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences.

Though Tomek learned her diagnostic imaging skills in school, she said her time at CCH has been instrumental in helping her learn the managerial skills she now uses as a department director.

“My schooling taught me how to take X-rays. It did not teach me how to deal with staffing issues or how to do other managerial things like a budget. That was all knowledge that I learned and continue to learn at CCH,” she said. **“CCH has been very supportive of me. They allowed me to learn and grow into the director I am today.”**

As director of Diagnostic Imaging at CCH, Tomek is responsible for all the day-to-day operations of that department, including staffing, scheduling, budgeting and handling all the other issues that may arise in the busy department with 38 employees.

“Every day is different,” Tomek said of her work. **“You learn really quickly to multitask.”**

This variety is one of the reasons Tomek encourages people to consider a health care career.

“If you choose a career in health care, you will never be bored. Every day is something different,” she said. **“And every field in health care has so many possibilities for growth.”**

In the field of radiology, for example, Tomek said people can do general X-ray, CT, MRI, ultrasound, mammography, nuclear medicine, bone density or radiation therapy and many technologists at CCH are licensed in multiple areas.

“There is a great opportunity for growth in our profession,” she said. **“Radiology is always changing, there are new technologies and new uses for the technologies that we currently have.”**

CCH’s administration and board allow Tomek to attend a national meeting each year so she can keep up with all the changes in the field of radiology – and bring those advancements back to CCH.

“Our administration and hospital board have always been very instrumental in allowing me to keep our equipment up-to-date and add new technologies as they become available,” she said. **“It is important to have this available to our patients so they do not need to go out of town to get the services they need.”**

To learn more about Tomek or CCH’s state of the art diagnostic imaging services, visit www.columbushosp.org.