

“Where do you see yourself in 10 years?”

All of my life, I have done my best to stay very organized and keep my goals ahead of me. About two years ago, I decided I was going to pursue a career in nursing and set the goal to become a Certified Nurse’s Assistant and get started in the nursing field. I took some prerequisite nursing courses and over the summer of 2021 and began CNA training. It seemed like so much at the time to be in school and a CNA program, but upon completing of the CNA program I felt amazing. Towards the end of my program, my mom reached out and asked if I would be willing to help her care for my grandmother Marion who was struggling with dementia. I thought that I would just do tasks like help her get dressed, make her meals, and take her to appointments occasionally. Her health declined severely in October of 2021, she became unconscious and passed away nine days later.

My grandmother was my biggest cheerleader, and she was so proud of me on my pursuit of becoming a nurse. Caring for her during her passing was the most challenging thing I have ever done but I wouldn’t trade that experience for anything. With my first patient being my grandmother, caring for her taught me so much about how important mental health is and how impactful it is to meet people where they are at emotionally not just physically. After caring for her, I worked for ten months in the Oncology department at St. Joseph Medical Center in Tacoma. I cared daily for patients with extreme circumstances, some patients are dealing with a new diagnosis, and some patients fighting terminal cancer. While we were there to provide for their physical needs, nothing ministered to our patients more than fulfilling their emotional needs. Decorating their room with motivational posters, listening to how they are really feeling that day, rubbing their feet for relaxation or giving them an opportunity to talk on the phone to their loved ones. These moments changed the way our patients felt about their care, and it gave them a little peace even if it was temporary.

In ten years, I will be a registered nurse continuing to care for patients physically and emotionally or I will be a nurse educator. I am currently enrolled in the nursing program at Tacoma to begin an Associate degree in Registered Nursing, but I would really hope to continue my education and become a nurse educator. I would love to teach nursing from my perspective of how important emotional healing can be and how it can impact a patient’s decision to be a part of their care and to take care of their whole being. In my personal life, I hope to be a mother of a few children and be moved from our first home in south Tacoma to a safer neighborhood with more property to grow food. I hope to have a greenhouse where I can grow some foods year-round and have my children help me and learn to love gardening like I do. My husband would have a music studio to where he could give guitar lessons as a side income in a separate space and create music in his downtime. We have always talked about having the financial means to foster dogs before they find their families. We rescued two border collies in 2019 and

2021 and rehabilitating them to feel safe happy and healthy is so rewarding. I see us in ten years settled in our careers and pursuing our hobbies while working hard to be good parents and raise our children in a safe home. We will be a part of our communities in different way, my husband teaching children or adults how to play guitar which is a hobby that brought him joy and comfort growing up. I will be involved by educating our future nurses to see the bigger picture when you care for a patient. For example, imagine a nurse is caring for a patient who is uncooperative and can be rude at times. For a busy nurse, it could be tempting to get in and out of that room quickly to avoid that patient. However, for a caring nurse, this kind of patient could use extra time to understand why they are the way that they are, and we can try to understand them and what kind of care we can provide to encourage them.

This example is just one real life situation I would love to explain to future nurses, and I am not even finished with my program yet. I hope to always be learning about how I can care better for patients. Receipt of the Jay Holstine scholarship can help pay for tuition and the other many expenses that accumulate during nursing school. There are many miscellaneous costs to keep up with the criteria our clinical sites set for us. While I will be working part-time to try to maintain my health benefits and pay for groceries, I am still going to be primarily living off loans to pay for my share of living expenses. My husband has often worked overtime while I was in my prerequisites to help with my share of the bills, and I don't want him to burn out by having to work too many hours to help pay for our living expenses. I am so grateful to be considered for the Jay Holstine scholarship and I want to thank you for reading.