

Brittany Mueller



Why did you choose older adult services as a career? My life experiences have shaped me in a positive way and have ultimately guided me to choose older adult services as a career. Growing up in a Christian family has impacted my thoughts and actions concerning personal and professional ethics. However, I am intrigued by the diversity and the unique beliefs that the older adult population has to offer. This then motivated me to educate myself on these differences to help me be well informed and act appropriately in the older adult medical field. I became passionate in older adult care when I was given an opportunity to partake in a leadership experience in my community during my time volunteering at Heartland Home Health Care. I was assigned to provide care and comfort to an elderly gentleman who, with terminal cancer, was abandoned by his family and had no other support system to provide empathy and compassion. I was able to utilize my creativity, strong communication skills, and effective leadership skills as I made him feel at home again during his final moments in life. This was a very rewarding experience that allowed me to come to the realization that an older adult service was indeed the right career path for me.

What do you want to do with your life and how do you hope to impact the older adult services profession? Nursing provides an assortment of opportunities, professional skills, flexibility, job satisfaction, diversity, and a variety of education levels for entry into the profession. However, my rationale for choosing to enter the nursing profession as a baccalaureate prepared nurse stems from my sense of inquisitiveness, constant patient interaction, and my sincere desire to help patients and their families in critical times. I feel as though my past experiences with family and the healthcare system have positively influenced me to become part of the network of heartfelt nurses that encompass this field of older adult care. I am also intrigued by the fact that nurses don't have to look far to encounter all sorts of cultural diversities, such as ethnic customs, traditions, and taboos. I long for the feeling that nurses get at the end of the day, knowing that they just made a difference in countless people's lives. In the future, I then hope to impact the older adult services profession through the utilization of my acquired nursing skills to physically and emotionally aid older adults as well as spiritually nurture them by sharing my professional confidence, maturity, and compassion.

Provide a specific example of when you positively impacted someone through the care or services you provided. At the Commons on Marice, I believe that I positively impact the residents through my care and services that I provide. One specific time that really stands out to me was when I took time out of each shift to visit a resident who recently lost her husband. It was no secret that the resident greatly relied on her husband for her support and care. Therefore, following his funeral she never came out of her apartment to socialize. I then felt a strong sense of desire to frequently check up on her and provide her with the necessary care and support that she felt as though she had lost with her husband. I would go up to her apartment daily and simply just sit at her kitchen table with her and discuss her favorite topic, the weather. I found myself waking up thirty minutes earlier each morning in order to educate myself on the latest weather update. I never knew if the resident enjoyed our time together as much as I did. That was until one day when I was leaving and she stopped me. With a smile on her face, she stated, "Brittany, you have put color back into my life again, it is now as bright as the morning sunset." This was the most rewarding statement that someone has ever said to me as it significantly opened my eyes on my ability to impact each resident I care for at the facility.

How have you positively impacted your organization and increased its effectiveness (through teaching, mentoring, serving on committees, etc.)? I have established strong leadership skills during my time of volunteering at Fairview Medical Center. I am currently assigned to the hectic surgical floor where I find myself working hard on my own and helping the nursing assistants be more efficient with their time. Another experience that has helped me prepare to be a leader in the nursing profession was being a Link Crew Leader for the underclassmen in high school. During my junior and senior year at Century High School, I was selected by staff to be a mentor to a group of freshman in order to relieve the intimidating transition from middle school to high school. While being a Link Crew Leader, I organized many activities so the students could get to know their fellow classmates along with the upperclassmen. In addition, I found myself personally reaching out to each one of them so they did not feel like just a number, but rather like they had their own place at our school. However, during this time the students were not the only ones influenced by the experience. I was able to gain many useful insights and techniques on how to help myself in similar situations. I believe that establishing these mentoring relationships had important implications for my leadership development such as providing me with experiences of helping people through pressing situations.