

### Highlights From the 25th Anniversary Survey

Thanks to all who completed our online survey! Here are the results.

#### Most memorable moments from your time in nursing school...

- Awaiting our final grades for graduation in the hallway and realizing how far we had all come together as individuals and as a team
- All the long nights spent studying after the long day filled with clinicals, school, basketball practice, etc. ... Sitting in the family room of Wesley Hospital with Melinda Current and crying (which I do not do) because I couldn't figure out a math problem. You have to be a nurse to truly understand that I was crying for so much more than that silly number problem. I was crying for the elderly patient that I sat with while she told me stories of her life with her husband by her side, as she was dying of cancer. I was crying for the huge amount of stress nursing school can place on a person and all you want to do is pass and take the NCLEX. I was crying because as a nurse I now understand that we place a lot on our plates at all times because we feel we have to make everything better. I love my job.
- There are several memorable moments... but I did realize early that a very challenging and rewarding career was in store.
- The semester when every class had a major project, paper or presentation due in the same week and I went at least 72 hours with no sleep. I fell asleep mid-sentence after it was all over when I went to a friend's house after school.
- We had phenomenal teachers and learned so much from them. I still remember during our ICU rotation we would try to figure out ways to avoid our instructor Winnie Lacey's really hard questions. We'd be on the lookout and warn each other when she was coming and get really busy with our patients.
- I was the only male in the class and was made an "Honorary One of The Girls" so I would "fit in." A close second would be the "Seasoned Nurse Society," but it dropped in membership when my class graduated.
- Too many to pick one... clinicals... study groups... pushing myself... my classmates.
- I can't think of just one memorable moment. The entire 2 years were extremely memorable. The way everyone in my class grew to become like a family was interesting. We all had our moments with each other, yet overall we worked as a team and got through it all. I know that with other degrees, you don't get as close with your professors/classmates they way I experienced it and I think that is pretty memorable.
- Probably my psych clinicals with Susan. What a trip!
- Studying is all I remember!!
- The most memorable times included critical care clinicals with Winnie Lacey (instructor) at Wesley Medical Center in Wichita. I remember I was petrified and intimidated with all the equipment, alarms, pumps, monitors, multiple IVs and most of all I was scared about taking care of a patient had so many critical needs. Winnie's expertise and caring demeanor were very non-threatening and educational. After my clinicals...

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cal rotation with Winnie I began to think about my long term career in nursing and in what area I would work after graduation. I must say - Winnie was inspirational to me and her clinical rotation inspired me to apply for my first job in an ICU, and my ICU tenure lasted shy of a decade. I only left because of physical challenges after an injury. I give Winnie Lacey the credit for encouraging me and challenging me each day which I feel was the foundation for my successful career in nursing.

- Chartering the first Southwestern College KS Association of Nursing Students chapter.
- The great friends I made!
- I have a lot of memorable moments from my time in nursing school, it is hard to choose the most memorable. To mention a few, our mission trip to Juarez, Mexico, including the heart-throbbing, teeth-grating bus ride from the airport to our humble temporary home. Interacting with the local school children (at Juarez) and providing glasses to them, and their joy to be able to see more clearly. Midnight projects at the SC library with classmates, almost every night. The long drives to Wesley at 5am for clinicals. The never-ending papers, projects, printing, research and more projects. Words of encouragement and wicked humor from Ms. Jane, Ms. Jackie and Ms. Phyllis.
- I was an RN-BSN student during the time the program was on campus, and classes were taken with non-licensed students. I have always been enthused about nursing but being in class with these students, who were more enthusiastic than me and had fresh ideas about nursing, gave me a new and “improved” perspective on nursing. I believe this experience eventually lead me to be a nursing instructor.
- Getting up super early for clinicals in Wichita. Thinking it would get harder when I was actually working as a nurse, instead it comes together and is easier. Doing research at the library late at night. Actually using books, instead of the internet! Staying up late in the basement in small study groups.
- The most memorable times are the times spent with fellow classmates. I look back on those times and now that I don’t see those people every day, I really miss them. I wish I’d stayed in touch better with them.
- Besides my awesome instructors and classmates, my favorite/funniest memory is my very first day of nursing school: There were a few of us that had been attending SC for pre-nursing, but many of us that hadn’t, so it was like the first day of college all over again. I was very nervous, but it was in the fall and I was having two-a-day practices for volleyball, so I came straight from practice, no shower or anything. So, in I walk (a little late from hurrying across campus) with ice on my shoulder and still sweaty. There were several new faces and I’m sure they wondered who this crazy person was! But it served as a good ice breaker and everyone knew right away that I was on the volleyball team!
- Statistics - I never could figure out what that had to do with taking someone’s temperature!
- My most memorable moment would have to be our road trip to Topeka for Day at the Legislature. We had so much fun as a group. The relationships that were built in nursing school still are intact today.
- Graduation!
- The trip to Mexico. It was such a life changer. It made me want to be the best nurse I could when I have all the advantages of modern healthcare for my practice and patients. I will remember that clinic and those people forever, it was real.

# What keeps you passionate about nursing?

- The ability to help/care for others and their loved ones
- Patients and students; offering of self
- I love seeing kids smile and connecting with the families as a person and not just as their nurse.
- The ability to help people and their loved ones in times of stress and need.
- Teaching is synonymous with nursing in that we care for the other, and assist them to self actualization. People will always need support and someone to trust, and that person embodies the nurse!
- The diversity. Learning something new most every night I go to work.
- I have been in health care for 39 years. For the last 5 years, I have had the privilege to give back just a little to the veterans who sacrificed so much for this great country. Without their sacrifice, none of us would be doing what we are doing today. Being a nurse should be more of a ministry than just a job. Col 3:17 ... *whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.*
- There are always changes to improve patient care and many opportunities
- Nursing is an awesome career! There are so many opportunities and choices and no two days are alike. My favorite thing is the ability to step into people's lives and hopefully make a difference. It dawned on me one day that it is just a day "at work" for me but this is their life and may be a pivotal moment for them. They might remember me forever....and I hope it is in a good light for me personally and on a bigger scale for the nursing profession.
- Every once in awhile you will have a patient that touches your heart deeply, and keeps you loving your job.
- The practicability of nursing in all facets of life.
- I love that in nursing, if you get burnt out or overwhelmed or just need a new challenge, you can stay in the profession but change to a different area of nursing and make things new again. Hospice and pediatrics have been my favorite areas. With hospice, which I have been doing for the past 4 years, you go home every day knowing you have made a difference to someone. I really enjoy the autonomy of working in patient's homes. The nursing field really feeds my need for ongoing learning.
- Being able to take part in intimate parts of people's lives. I love being able to help people through labor. It's a difficult time, yet in the end, it is a very happy (usually) outcome. I like being able to coach these women through it all.
- I absolutely love the people. I am passionate about my staff, care deeply for the patients and have good working relationships with physicians and ancillary staff
- Hoping that I make a difference with my patients – even those who cannot always clearly communicate their needs
- I believe nursing is a "calling" from God. The most rewarding thing for me is the ability/opportunity to truly make a difference in the lives of patients and their families.
- The surprise element of nursing. Every day is different bringing new challenges most every moment.

- Working with kids, watching them grow and develop. Trying to make a small difference in their lives by trying to remove barriers or make accommodations for better learning in school.
- The people I serve feed the need for knowledge to constantly improve the care I give.
- The respect that I learned from the professors at Southwestern. It is a respect for the professionalism and continued change of the field. Nursing evolves and we move with it. It gives me an inner pride when I answer the question, What's your job? Or what do you do?

## How has nursing changed since you were in nursing school?

- Technology, computer charting, increase in paperwork
- It continues to improve and become more challenging both physically and mentally!
- The economy has changed the focus of nursing and perhaps the motivation for becoming a nurse
- Nurse have to have more knowledge today than I did when I graduated. In many situations they are more autonomous, they are doing procedures that at the time I graduated may not have been a standard or even invented, and were not delegated to nurses. Today, nurses need to understand the environment and the effects on health, cultural beliefs in healthcare, health promotion and healthcare economics.
- Necessity of increasing nursing educational standards
- More documentation; sometimes repeating the same things in more than one flowchart; computerized charting, lower census, better pain control for the terminally ill patient
- Change! It continues to improve and become more challenging both physically and mentally!
- I have seen pt. ratios change for the good, back to bad back to good. It varies. Nurses are having a MUCH bigger voice in health care.
- Nurses as the front line caregiver has continued to grow. Physicians have become more dependent on nurses' assessment, particularly in the areas of home health and hospice. When I first graduated in 1994, we were frequently told that you pretty much had to start your nursing career in med-surg and then move on from there. The options are wide open now. In fact, even in 1994, I started in LTC for six months then went in to PICU. You build your skills with each job that you have and each area that you work in.
- Nurses now have more capability of promoting change in their practices. Nurses are more instrumental in providing evidence-based-practice, and administrators are more willing to listen to nurses' opinions. Graduate nurses are expected to have the capability to care for a more complex patient demographic than before.
- There have been improvements in the recognition of nursing injuries with the no-lifting policies along with mechanical lifts being used.

## **First job in nursing:**

- Staff nurse
- College health
- Acute care (including medical, surgical, critical care, pediatrics, labor/delivery/postpartum, oncology, and ER)
- Correctional health
- School nurse
- Public health

## **Of those completing the survey:**

- 97% are employed in nursing
- 34% have attended graduate school
- 82% are members of professional organizations, hold professional certifications or are involved in health-care related community service.