

NOTABLE nurses

By Jeff Weiner & Virginia Kiddy

While not always as visible as the doctors they work with, nurses change the lives of patients every day.

In the final part of our Unsung Heroes series, we recognize outstanding nurses in Central Florida for their commitment to making a difference.



Emma Pittman, Nurse Manager
Orlando Veteran's Administration Medical Center

Even for an experienced nurse, working with dementia patients is not an easy task.

"I must admit that the journey has not been easy, because, as a dementia nurse, I know that most of my residents will not go home," says Emma Pittman, a nurse manager at the Orlando VA Medical Center, who works in dementia care.

"The love of people and the oath of benevolence that I took as a nurse are my guides," says Pittman. "With the population of my residents, what also drives me is the fact that I am their advocate, because most of them do not know what is going on around them, with diminished cognition and dependent on their care."

Despite the difficulties associated with caring for dementia patients, Pittman, an award-winning nurse, says she finds strength in the knowledge that she is helping maintain the dignity of American heroes.

"As a nurse and an American citizen, nothing makes me prouder than being acknowledged for caring for our heroes who made this nation a better place for us to live and work," Pittman says.



JEFF WEINER

Nan Schroyer, Registered Nurse
Florida Hospital East Orlando

Though she has only been a registered nurse for three years, for former X-ray technician Nan Schroyer, nursing has been a lifelong passion. Her first experience in the field came when she was still a child, when a boy at summer camp complained that he wanted his stitches removed.

"I took his stitches out at age 9," recalls Schroyer, a registered nurse who works in the emergency room at Florida Hospital in East Orlando. "I've always loved helping people."

In the emergency room, patients often come in with soiled or damaged clothes, which sometimes have to be cut off during life-saving procedures, so Schroyer decided to start bringing in her family's outgrown clothes from home. It's just one of the many things she does every day, in an effort to make a difficult situation a little easier for patients and their families.

"You can come to the hospital, and it can be a bad experience or a good experience," Schroyer says, adding that good doctors and nurses, like the ones she works with at Florida Hospital, can make a hospital stay a positive experience.



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Debra Stephey, Assistant Nurse Manager
Winter Park Hospital

An assistant nurse manager at Florida Hospital in Orlando, Debra Stephey is both a student and a teacher.

Stephey, who works in the Intensive Care Unit and has been at Florida Hospital since 1990, serves as a mentor to her co-workers, while also working on her master's degree online at Walden University. She has already earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing from the University of Iowa.

According to her nomination, she was named a Florida Hospital Role Model of Excellence three times, in 2007, 2008 and 2009. After 32 years of nursing, 19 at her current hospital, Stephey can still remember how it all started.

"It sounds kind of corny or simple, but I really wanted to have a career where I could help other people," Stephey says. For Stephey, the opportunity to educate and oversee young nurses in her managerial role has added an extremely satisfying aspect to an already rewarding career. But her real source of pride remains simple.

"I would say, just making life just slightly easier for the people who are in the hospital and are in distress," she says.



JEFF WEINER

Marsha Bozeman, Registered Nurse
Florida Hospital East Orlando

For Marsha Bozeman, a career in nursing began as a family affair.

"Actually, the original reason I got into nursing was my sister-in-law was having a baby," recalls Bozeman, who explored labor and delivery care as an option before finding her calling in cardiology.

"I absolutely love my job," says Bozeman, who has worked in cardiology at Florida Hospital East for 10 years.

Though she calls herself a die-hard University of Florida football fan, Bozeman is currently attending the University of Central Florida, where she is working on her master's degree. In her off-hours, she enjoys spending time with her four pets.

Bozeman struggles to come up with the most difficult aspect of her job, but the most rewarding part is easy. "Doing a good job for your patient, just trying to be on top of everything for them," she says.

"Ever since I became a nurse, I've just had a heart for it," says Bozeman. "Our mission statement is to share the healing ministry of Christ, and I feel like that's just what I do in my job."



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