



TARA KAY RACE '98

Advanced Educator | UPMC Shadyside School of Nursing

For more than 20 years, the desire to learn helped Tara Kay Race launch and expand a successful nursing career.

As a staff nurse in the critical care unit of Heritage Valley Sewickley, Ms. Race obtained a bachelor's degree in nursing from La Roche College in 1998. She later pursued a master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh and became a clinical nurse specialist for Allegheny General Hospital's medical intensive care unit.

"I essentially 'grew up' in nursing as a critical care nurse," she explained. "My hospital family helped me acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be a competent nurse, and they afforded the opportunity to learn valuable lessons regarding relationships, life, death, ethics, faith and spirituality."

After completing her graduate degree, she returned to Heritage Valley as a nurse educator and pursued a doctor of nursing practice degree from Waynesburg University.

"I can honestly say I have never stopped learning and have always had somewhat of an addiction when it comes to pursuing higher education," she said.

Ms. Race's doctoral education eventually led to a faculty position with UPMC Shadyside School of Nursing, where she currently works as an advanced nurse educator, providing theory and clinical instruction to diploma nursing students.

"It is very rewarding to witness young graduates moving into successful nursing careers and experiencing the joy and satisfaction of caring for others," she stated.

Ms. Race said she considers her doctoral capstone her greatest professional achievement. The project, which focused on recognizing the early changes of a patient's condition, is in the process of being implemented into the electronic health record at UPMC Shadyside.

Outside of work, Ms. Race volunteers as a nurse for Camporee, an annual event for 200 Girl Scouts at Camp Redwing near Evans City, Pa. In addition, she recently served as chairperson of the Outreach Ministry at Montours' Presbyterian Church in Robinson Township, where she also serves as an elder and member of the session. She and her husband, Harold, have two daughters, Autumn and Taylor.