

Share Why We Care

Acadia Hospital: *Project Inspiration*



Beth Clark, PhD, RNC – Education Services

Having worked in and around psychiatric nursing for over 35 years, I have been involved with many health care institutions and settings. I have a strong basis for comparison. I am constantly impressed with what I experience and witness at Acadia Hospital. Although I am a full-time educator, I have been employed part-time at Acadia Hospital for close to five years. There are many ways that Acadia meets my need for satisfying professional growth, promoting quality nursing care, and connecting with a community of interdisciplinary professionals.

Excellent patient care is the mission of Acadia Hospital, yet I often gain as much from patients as I offer to them. When I worked on the child and adolescent units, I was humbled by the children's ability to persevere through enormous personal and life stressors. The children provided a constant reminder of the magnitude of the struggles patients encounter and the resilience of the human mind, body, and spirit. It is gratifying to know that simple acts of kindness go a long way toward reducing human suffering. A word of encouragement, the gift of presence, acknowledgement of a job well done – each of these takes little effort, yet has tremendous healing ability. I get satisfaction from the sense that I have curative powers through my simple acts of caring. Listening with an open heart and mind, valuing the individual, and honoring his or her wants and needs can have as much effect as the most sophisticated medical technology.

Acadia has provided me the opportunity to fit clinical practice into a busy professional career. Because of my academic and administrative demands, I need a job that provides flexible hours. The hospital has demonstrated understanding of the demands of academia and of the benefits reaped from collaboration between education and service.

Acadia has honored my personal interests and abilities and allowed me to collaborate on research projects, share my expertise, and tap the expertise of staff. When I have a creative idea, staff members listen and try to help me make that idea into an action plan. The committees that I have served have been interesting and rewarding. Acadia has dedicated staff members who represent a variety of interests and talents. I have been fortunate in having two excellent administrators who allowed me to grow in my positions, tapping on my strengths while forgiving my weaknesses.

Acadia meets my goals of sharing the human journey in a meaningful way with my family, students, coworkers, and patients. When not at work, I am buried in books that my librarian husband collects from many sources. Good thing I like to read. My two adult daughters bring me endless joy. Both work in jobs that involve helping at-risk students with a goal of improving quality of life, my primary area of research. My hobbies of quilting, scrapbooking, photography, and painting all serve as metaphors for how I blend nursing and education. Both are integrative and creative processes with the goal of honoring the human experience and leading to personal growth and self-awareness.

Want to Share? Email your essay to Alan Comeau at acomeau@emh.org.



TOGETHER We're Stronger

