



Carolinah HealthCare System

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A Passion for Nursing

Concord, N.C. — Jennifer Lopez '11 enrolled at Cabarrus College because of its excellent reputation for nursing education. She quickly learned that an education at Cabarrus College extends well beyond the classroom and even the excellent facilities of CMC-NorthEast. She also found that inspiration and opportunity can often occur when you least expect it.

Cabarrus College faculty often invite leaders in the field to provide a dose of real world experience for students. One of the guests each semester is Ernest Grant, RN, MSN, FAAN who has worked at the North Carolina Jaycee Burn Center at UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill for 30 years. Grant has talked with the Nursing 220 class in the fall and spring semesters at Cabarrus College for the past 15 years, as an inspiration to student nurses entering the profession, and to mold the minds of future leaders.

When Grant visited in 2011, Lopez was so intrigued by his presentation that she wanted to job shadow at the Burn Center to learn more. Spending a week at the Burn Center allowed Lopez to observe what a burn patient experiences after leaving a hospital such as CMC-NorthEast. Lopez quickly learned that working at the Burn Center involves many areas including geriatrics, pediatrics, family issues, psychological and social issues, and collaboration with over 17 different disciplines. The burn center also offers an extensive after care program providing support to patients after the burn heals, offering psychological and social assistance including help with relationships, facing society, and providing tools to help the patient get back into society. Because of this, the Burn Center provides a unique vantage point for students to learn. Grant believes that shadowing in the Burn Center is a great way to learn about all aspects of nursing. “Burns impact everything. After doing a job shadowing students are very well prepared for the NCLEX.”



Ernest Grant and Jennifer Lopez

Lopez was not expecting the experience to have as big of an impact on her as it did. Her work and passion for nursing had an impact on the Burn Center staff as well—they hired her immediately after she graduated from Cabarrus College! The job shadowing opportunities are offered to find the “perfect fit” for a job, and they found that with her.

Lopez now works as a Burn Center staff nurse and loves her job for many reasons, one of which is that nurses have a voice in the care of the patient. Lopez states “Every student should shadow in the Burn Center. This is a holistic approach to care and you get to see everything.”

Lopez stepped out of the classroom to learn and explore something new and it opened many doors of opportunity for her. This exemplifies what the learning experience at Cabarrus College is all about.

About Cabarrus College of Health Sciences

Cabarrus College of Health Sciences, an affiliate of Carolinas HealthCare System, is located on the campus of Carolinas Medical Center-NorthEast in Concord, N.C. Five hundred and fourteen students are enrolled in six associate degree and three baccalaureate completion programs. Associate degree programs include medical assistant, nursing, occupational therapy assistant, pharmacy technology, surgical technology and associate in science. Baccalaureate completion programs include health services leadership and management, medical imaging and nursing. The College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. For additional information, visit www.cabarruscollege.edu.

About Carolinas HealthCare System

[Carolinas HealthCare System](http://www.carolinashealthcare.org) (www.carolinashealthcare.org), one of the nation’s leading and most innovative healthcare organizations, provides a full spectrum of healthcare and wellness programs throughout North and South Carolina. Its diverse network of more than 650 care locations includes academic medical centers, hospitals, healthcare pavilions, physician practices, destination centers, surgical and rehabilitation centers, home health agencies, nursing homes and hospice and palliative care. CHS works to improve and enhance the overall health and wellbeing of its communities through high quality patient care, education and research programs, and numerous collaborative partnerships and initiatives.

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