

## **My Most Memorable Client**

In December 2005, I graduated cum laude from Central Michigan University's Honors Program with a Bachelor of Science in Biology: Microscopy/Pre-Med and a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Graphic Design. Immediately after graduating from Central Michigan, I made the hard decision to pursue a position offered to me in the design and advertising world. However, my passion in the medical field was rekindled when I headed into surgery in December of 2007. The nurses were so kind to me through the entire process, and even encouraged me to pursue my love for medicine. It was that experience when I realized the opportunity that I could give myself. My life had been changed by their kindness and encouragement, and I wanted to do the same for others.

Since then, I have known every day that I made the right decision. However, I think it really hit me during my first clinical in the fall of 2009. It was the second night I had the honor of taking care of a 92-year-old patient. When given my assignment the night prior, the staff nurses had snickered patted me on the back and told me "good luck." She was a spunky lady, knew exactly what she wanted, and made sure everyone else knew as well. But I thought she was tough. She suffered from liver failure and a stage III pressure ulcer in an area that made lying in a hospital bed very uncomfortable, to say the least. Despite a few pushes from my instructor to "hurry things up," I took my time with her and used a gentle touch, especially when changing her position and providing wound care. I maintained the belief that monitoring and caring for patients in any situation is a critical responsibility to have. I loved having that responsibility. Not only did I represent the hospital and my university, I represented the individual—the patient—who placed their life into my hands while I was with them.

When I came to her near the end of my shift, she grabbed my hand, and lifted her visor just a bit to look me in the eye. She said she would miss me and she had felt her best with me around. She told me to come back before I left because she wanted to give me her cell phone number. Her grip became stronger, and she smiled and went on to say, "I'd love for you to call me sometime. Perhaps you could come visit, take me for a walk, and we could have upper." I gripped her hand back, nodded, and told her what a pleasure it was to spend my time with her. I then walked away with tears in my eyes. I will never forget that moment. I will never forget her words.

Having an impact on another's life is not the only perk found in the path of becoming a nurse. Experiences are symbiotic. I may have the opportunity to change lives, but they change mine, too.