

Apryl Keaty

Why did you decide to go to TTUHSC?

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I moved here in 2000, from New Mexico. And over the years I've seen graduates, the school, the instructors, worked alongside them precepted their students, even the second degree and some of the other students now, different levels, all the different progresses. And I knew I wanted that stellar education. And I knew I saw the product. And I worked with the people. And I knew that that's where I wanted to go.

Did you encourage your daughter to study nursing or to attend TTUHSC?

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Ironically, no. So well, it evolved to that. But originally, so I look back and it was interesting to me, because when she was about three or four, she had said, as a parent, she said, you know, she was her sister was sick, she calls her sissy, and she's like, I take sissy to the doctor, I give sissy medicine, I'll take care of sissy, and she had all these references to caring for her. But I thought, okay, that could be a mother, a public servant, that could be anybody. And I didn't think much about that. Then later on, I do disaster medicine as a health and human services employee, and I was deployed, and I had sent a picture. And she made this T shirt with all these details for me as a gift when I came back, and I still didn't kind of process because I thought, okay, that could be EMS, right? That could be a physician, that could be anybody. And as the years progressed, it became I, she brought everybody to the house, I was the you know, my mom can help you, my mom can fix you. I saw the compassion, and I saw the details of nursing, start coming out. And then in college, it went full bore, she would call me and she had somebody pass out in class. And she told everybody what to do. And she told them to call 911. And then there was somebody with an allergic reaction, and all these little things that I never put together until later. So she wanted to go to tech, and I totally encourage tech. I love Texas Tech. But she said one day that she had to make a decision, she had to pick a track, she had to go nursing, physical therapy, and I think I can't remember what the other one that she had narrowed it down to she had shadowed and she made all these decisions. And I remember her looking at me clearly as you're sitting there. And she said, This is all I want to do, Mom, she goes this is all I want to do. I want to be a nurse. And I remember, my heart was so full. I couldn't believe that I missed it all those years. And she's an amazing nurse. Like I can remember it clearly is this day. And I was like, Listen, this is tough. I mean, are you sure? Mom, it's all I see me doing? It's all I see me doing. And, and from that point on, I was her biggest fan. I was her biggest cheerleader. There was no question where we wanted her go. She didn't even apply anywhere else. Like she said, I said, What if you don't get in, she's like, then I'll just keep applying. It was just the path kind of was there. So once she made, once we knew Yes, I was her biggest cheerleader.

What was it like to work at the same place as your daughter?

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That was really, really fun. was fun because I knew her character was fun. I knew her integrity. But what I loved the most was standing back and not being Tabitha's mother. But being her co worker, seeing Tabitha Keaty who was the nurse who graduated Dean's list who she did all of that on her own. She got her RN on her own. She got in the nurse residency program on her own. She did her resumes and her interviews on her own. She got her CCRN on her own. And I loved it when people would come

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up and go oh, you know, is that your daughter? And I'd say yes, that's my daughter and they say, Oh, well, you know, doesn't fall far from the tree are those things that referenced parenting and I would immediately say she did this all on her own. This was her This was 100% her and I loved seeing her evolve into the nurse that she is right now. She had the knowledge, I mean that Texas Tech prepares them like nobody else. But to see that evolve and be put together. It was it was really great. It was really great.

How long did you work side-by-side?

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Two, little over two and a half years. So her home unit was medical intensive care unit and I go everywhere. So I would be some it would it be hit or miss if I was working on that unit. So it was a really treat. When I did that for about two years. We would either encounter each other be on the same side, the north or south side of MICU or if we were working people knew that we weren't hanging out, right, just hanging out there visiting, we were working, and that we would help anybody and they would put us wherever we needed to be. And it was so fun. I got two years to work with her.

Any advice for future nurses?

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You know, that's tough nursing is one of, always been, I think one of the hardest professions. It is now in my opinion, probably one of the toughest professions out there. It is mentally and physically challenging. And you have it's a profession, and it's a career, but you have to want to be a nurse. If you don't want to be a nurse, you're not going to be that stellar nurse that you want me taking care of you, or somebody at that level, taking care of you the physical and mental challenges that we have now been shown that the world has now seen from 2020 COVID. It has waken people up that we all play a part in everything that's coming. Everything that hits this country, we all play a part, grocery store clerks, everybody was absolutely a pivotal part to encounter getting through the pandemic. But you could not get through the pandemic without bedside clinical nurses. You couldn't. There was no way. And I think it woke people up to the difference we can make. What a proud profession it is what we can give people that nobody else can give you not like this. But how very difficult and challenging it is. So I tell people, it's a great profession and career. But you have to want to be a nurse. And you get what you get what you reap what you sow, you can put into it's evidence based practice, we're learning every day. I feel like I know less today than I knew 20 years ago, because there's so much wealth of information, and it's constantly evolving. So if you put in it, you can get back, but run your part of the relay race well, if I don't do my part because it's a 24/7 job, and I leave you in a lurch or somebody else in a lurch that isn't good for our patients. It's not good for our care. So just know what you're getting into. It's wonderful. It's the best thing ever. And there's nothing that's so gratifying, but it is a tough, tough, tough roll.