

Missouri Career Mentor video transcript



Eric Hardwick, RN

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My name is Eric Hardwick and I am a registered nurse. I work in a community hospital, and I work in a “step-down” unit. A step-down unit involves working with patients with heart disease, lung disease. So we specialize in patients who have heart problems and lung problems.

Early Interest

Right out of high school I was pretty unsure of what I wanted to do, and so I was kinda going from job to job, unsure. Eventually, I was working in a hospital working as an E.R. (emergency room) admissions representative and got involved in working with nursing and became very interested in nursing. I thought, well hey, that’s something I would really like to do - and so I pursued my goal and became a nurse by taking some nursing classes through a college locally.

Certifications

I went to college and got an associate’s degree in applied science in nursing. I work in a step-down unit, which involves working with cardiac and respiratory patients. In order to do that, I got certifications in basic life support and advanced cardiac life support.

Characteristics

If you are thinking about becoming a nurse, some important characteristics of becoming a nurse would include being somebody who is hard-working, dependable, detail-oriented, very organized, personable, because patients want to relate to you when they are sick. They want somebody to take care of them who is very organized and very detail-oriented.

Joys & Challenges

What I enjoy most about my career is getting to know my patients – from the time that they walk in the door to being able to see them feeling better and with a smile on their face ready to go home. The most challenging thing I would say about my career would be patients who have difficulty communicating with me, patients who have difficulties with Alzheimer’s disease, diseases such as that, or stroke that patients have a hard time communicating with me, and I have a hard time communicating with them.

Early Influence

.... I would say would be my parents. They have taught me to be very personable to people, to be very detail-oriented, to be a hard worker. And I think in my career I need those three things. They are very important in order to do my job and do it successfully.

High School Classes

Looking back at my high school experiences and classes, I would say that classes such as biology helped, as well as nutrition and extra-curricular activities, such as baseball and basketball. The extra-curricular activities helped me with being able to work as a team. You need that in the health care field, whether it's nursing or any other type of health care field – teamwork is essential.

In Retrospect

If I was to have to do it all over in high school, I would have taken more science classes, more anatomy/physiology classes, as well as look in the hospital and become a patient care tech or a nurse assistant to help prepare me for this field that I have gone into.

Advice

If there is any advice I would like to give to students, it would be that nursing is a very rewarding and demanding field. And if you do become a nurse, it is important that you remember that you treat those patients that you are taking care of as if those are your loved ones. I feel that you will find this career very rewarding.

Memorable Moment

I was taking care of a male patient in his 50s one night when he was resting comfortably earlier in the evening. Around midnight the patient started getting short of breath, started having chest pain. When I went to look at his heart rhythm, it identified that his rhythm was in what we call a “lethal deadly rhythm,” and so I went in, assessed the patient, was able to perform my assessment skills to the fullest extent, give him medication, and save his life. Later on, a couple of days later, the patient thanked me and was very emotional. I would say that was one of my best times as a nurse.