

Kay Hill Has Accomplished Something She Always Wanted

Nearly 10 years ago Kay Hill set out to accomplish something she had always wanted to do — become a registered nurse at Presbyterian Hospital.

Her arduous personal journey began first at Presbyterian as a licensed practical nurse in 1969. She worked about a year and left the program when her son was born. In 1971 she returned to Presbyterian and "worked all over the house" wherever she was needed.

By 1975, after working in the Intensive Care and Coronary Care Units, she made the big decision to enter the school of nursing full-time. In June, 1989, she was officially a registered nurse.

Today, as the operating room nurse responsible for overseeing sterile techniques, she can look back with pride over her demanding personal journey.

"Before I came here, I gave it a lot of thought: whether I wanted a two-year program — every consideration I could think of. She chuckles as she tells the deciding factor: "This

straight program—with no time for me to say 'I can't do it.'"

And it wasn't easy for her as a single parent. As the mother of a six-year-old son, she told him, "Eric, you have to go through

...Examines X-rays

nursing with me. And I was lucky. There was a delightful woman in our neighborhood who was always there for Eric and for me."

But still there were those times that every working parent faces. "Once Eric

told my mother I didn't love him, or I would stay at home with him more," she recalled. "That hurts to hear."

At such times, when the school work was difficult enough without the addi-

tional responsibilities of motherhood, there was solace in the comforting words of the director of students. "Mrs. Ann P. White was very supportive. Those times I felt I just couldn't make it, she helped me out," Mrs. Hill says.

For Kay Hill, R.N., the work day starts at 7:00 a.m. in the operating room, where she may help with an average of three surgery cases — sometimes more. "The cases range from elective surgery to emergency surgery," she says. After her nearly five years in surgery, she knows the procedure precisely. "I gather the supplies needed for surgery: all the sterile instruments, medications, lab reports and X-rays."

Responsible for sterility procedures, she says she sometimes feels as though she's "casing the room, watching to be sure every technique is followed." She wheels out the table of sterile instruments, each in a protective wrap. "As the scrub nurse, who assists during the surgery,

puts on a sterile gown, I tie her gown on." And during the surgery, Mrs. Hill opens one by one the sterile packages of instruments, handing them to the scrub nurse.

What's the hardest part of being a nurse? "It's seeing children with problems like cancer that aren't correctable."

Keeping her going through the long hours in surgery as part of the team battling daily to save lives, "I tell myself that patients need this help, and we're helping save lives. That these patients are going to be better off after the surgery than when they came."

The Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing is the largest hospital-based school in the Carolinas. Its strong emphasis on clinical experience starting in the program's first year is just one of the school's many attractive features.

The 80 year-old program attracts students of all ages and backgrounds and offers a wide range of training opportunities.



PRESBYTERIAN NURSING STUDENT



Alpha Phi Alpha Award - Henry H. Brown (center), vice president of marketing development and affairs for Anheuser-Busch, Inc., and a life member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, received the Daniel W. Bowles, Sr. Award from the Epsilon Lambda Chapter in St. Louis.

The award is given annually for outstanding leadership and contributions to the community and the fraternity. Making the presentation are Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity members Larry Goodwin, president of the Epsilon Lambda Chapter, and Ron Smiley.

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