

2018 Lifetime Achievement Award
PEGGY CAMPBELL

Leading

BY EXAMPLE

For Peggy Campbell, nursing isn't simply a job. Nursing is a discipline, she said, one she's been practicing since she earned her associate's degree in 1983. "When I started out, I learned about being a nurse. And then I gradually became a nurse with experience," she said. "I needed to experience the thinking part of it and the practice part of it. I feel like I had to do it awhile to really own it and kind of complete that transition into being a nurse."

Campbell, MSN, RN-BC, is being recognized with this year's Salute to Nurses Lifetime Achievement Award. For the last decade, the Williamston resident has been a College of Nursing instructor at Michigan State. "I sort of have the best worlds: nursing and education. Both of those professions, they become part of your life," she said.

At MSU, she teaches clinical experiences to groups of nursing students, mostly in their senior year of their programs. Watching her students mature over the semester is a rich experience.

"(Students) come in as very enthusiastic students and they're nervous," she said. "They've got a lot of classroom knowledge but they're almost hesitant when they come into the hospital. And then they go through the semester and I get to see them transform into thinking, caring

nurses."

She also teaches an online leadership course, designed for nurses with associate's degrees who are now pursuing their bachelor's degrees. The course pairs students with a nurse leader in the communi-

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- CAMPBELL, ON HER ROLE AS AN INSTRUCTOR

ties in which they live, plus leadership theory online.

"I have been fortunate spot to be able to help (students), reinforcing to them that they're prepared to do this," she said. "I feel like I'm in the right place."

"When observing her on the hospital unit it is obvious that nursing is her passion," Carol Vermeesch wrote in her nomination letter of Campbell. "Her dedication to nursing is evident in so many ways, including the high standards she requires of students, the care and compassion she brings to patients, and the vigor

and intensity in which she teaches the art and science of nursing."

Nursing has been full of diverse experiences over her career. Among her

highlights are jobs in an intensive care unit, and as a camp nurse for 18 summers at Camp Lookout in Frankfurt ("It was probably the hardest I worked all year," she laughed). She's worked for a company that sold critical care monitoring devices, which allowed her to travel the country training nurses to use new technology.

Then for 20 years she was a hospital educator. Her days were varied, which she appreciated. "Sometimes it was to help new nurses get started or change into a new role in their career. Sometimes it was working ... to improve quality and safety. That work is very rewarding."

Campbell is board-certified in professional development. "We strive to better nurses and better nurse educators as a result of Peggy's influence," Vermeesch wrote. "She possesses a unique talent for lifting her peers and students to a higher level of achievement."

"Nursing has meant a lot of opportuni-



ties for me," she said. The thread that's woven throughout has been coaching, mentoring, and teaching. "I can't say that was planned. I think it's something that sort of emerged over time."

She's most grateful that her career has created a network of support around her, whether for clinical decisions, career advice, or something more personal.

"My mom passed away about a year ago and that was awful," she said. "But an amazing part of that journey was that she was cared for by so many nurses that were my colleagues and friends and past students and even current students. I can't begin to describe ... I don't have the words for it. But it was touching."

Strong relationships she's made throughout her career were especially important during that time. "These were all my nurses."

-Erin F. Wasinger for the Lansing State Journal