

CELEBRATING NURSES: MEET SOME OF OUR NURSE HEROES



ABIGAIL DUNNE, RN
Glen Cove Hospital
Northwell Health

Abigail Dunne's path into healthcare began during her high school years in Locust Valley.

"I went to Locust Valley High School and I took an EMT course and I started volunteering in the Bayville Fire Department as an EMT," Dunne, 23, says. "I decided that I really enjoyed helping people and I really liked being able to help people in ways that others couldn't necessarily."

Her experience in emergency medical services shaped her decision to pursue nursing, to provide what she described as a deeper level of care.

"So it was more than just offering emotional support, but now it's like physical support and seeing people get better, get stronger. It's just been something that's always made me feel really good. I just love helping people."

Dunne went on to attend nursing school while a nursing assistant at Glen Cove Hospital, where she has been employed since September 2022.

"I've worked at Glen Cove ... I was a nursing assistant during nursing school."

She relates that her role as a nurse centers on compassion and service to others.

"I feel like being a nurse, it's really just about being able to give to other people. We know people are sick and being able to help them definitely is very rewarding in itself."

Healthcare runs in her family. Her sister works in EMS and as a nurse at Plainview Hospital, and her great-grandfather was a doctor.

- As told to Roksana Amid



TAMEKA WALLACE, RN
Glen Cove Hospital
Northwell Health

Tameka Wallace, 42, vice president and chief nursing officer at Glen Cove Hospital, did not initially plan a career in health care.

"My path was finance," Wallace says, explaining that she once hoped to pursue her father's career path. "I wanted to follow in my father's footsteps. He worked on Wall Street, and I was always fascinated."

Her trajectory shifted after she took a job in hospitality services at North Shore University Hospital at age 16. By 18, she had moved onto a Telemetry unit, where she discovered her passion for patient care.

"Once I was able to get on the first unit, I fell in love with patient care services."

That experience, coupled with working alongside her mother, helped shape her future.

"I actually started nursing school with my mom. We did nursing school together, and we actually graduated together as well."

Wallace, who has been with Northwell Health for 26 years and a nurse for more than two decades, shares that her work is rooted in advocacy and compassion.

"What nursing means to me is being the patient and caregiver's advocate; making sure that they feel that they are at home, away from home. You want to put the patient at ease at a very tough time in their life."

Now in a leadership role, Wallace aims to highlight the broader impact of the profession.

"My goal is to make sure that we get the word out on how special nursing is. It's not just being at the bedside, we touch so many people in so many ways."

- As told to Roksana Amid



**EBONY NORVILLE, RN,
NURSE MANAGER**
St. John's Episcopal Hospital
Episcopal Health Services

As a child, I have always had a love for medicine. One of my first toys was a stethoscope, and I loved to play doctor and surgery on my dolls. My favorite television shows have been related to medicine. My late father would say "Medicine is in your blood! You're born with it!"

One day, I could not help but to ask my father why he said this. He went on to explain that his aunt worked as an RN in England for over 20 years, and my grandmother worked as a CNA. As I thought about this, I realized that he was right! Some of my fondest memories as a child are of my family members caring for the elders.

Upon further reflection I realized my most cherished childhood memories involve my family instinctively knowing how to care for our elders, anticipating their needs for healing or comfort. As I matured, the realization struck me: the care, compassion, attentiveness, and nurturing instinct that is within me, is the core of nursing. Almost instinctively knowing what's needed to heal or cure others.

Throughout my professional life, I have had the privilege of working in diverse settings, and those fundamental nursing principles have remained constant. Today, I am incredibly proud and grateful to be a registered nurse.



ST. JOHN'S
EPISCOPAL HOSPITAL



**LUCKENDY CHERY, RN,
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**
St. John's Episcopal Hospital
Episcopal Health Services

My desire to become a nurse was shaped early in life, growing up surrounded by healthcare professionals, including pharmacists, physicians and a long line of nurses across various specialties. It felt like a path I was always meant to follow.

Although I briefly pursued a degree in business administration, it didn't take long for me to return to my true calling. My journey began as an EMT, where I was known for going above and beyond in patient care, showing compassion, empathy and a commitment to doing my best. My curiosity led me to seek more than just immediate care. I wanted to understand what happened to my patients after I transferred them and how their care continued.

This curiosity led me to work as a Behavioral Health Technician for five years, where I supported patients on a Behavioral Health unit. There, I saw firsthand the profound impact nurses had through compassion, teaching and therapeutic interventions. I found fulfillment in reinforcing coping skills and lessons patients could carry back into their communities. Ultimately, my experiences, curiosity and support system guided me to nursing.

Now, after one year as a nurse, I embrace my role as an educator, advocate and leader entrusted with lives and responsible for making a meaningful difference. I chose nursing to be a positive force in the lives of patients and their families, to educate them in ways they can understand, and to serve as an example that empowers others to advocate for themselves and pursue nursing as well.



ST. JOHN'S
EPISCOPAL HOSPITAL