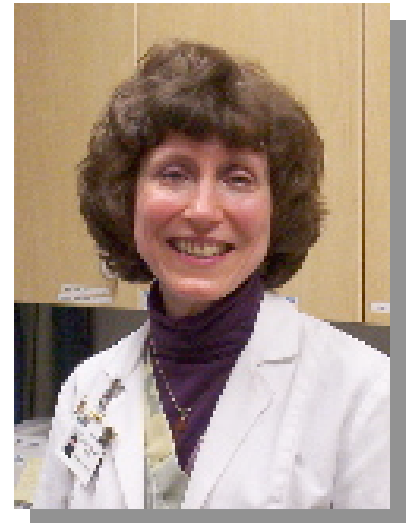


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## RT Spotlight: Debra Maxwell, RT

By  
*Elizabeth Whitlock, CRT*  
*ASRC Public Relations Chair*

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The respiratory field is full of professional hard working individuals. There are numerous stories that epitomize an excellent Respiratory Therapist. In particular, Debra Maxwell, RRT, of Advance Care Hospital-*Long Term Acute Care* in Fort Smith, Arkansas is one such individual. Debra loves living in Arkansas. In particular, she is very impressed with the way that the medical community cares about the total well being of their patients.

Debra has been employed as the Respiratory Coordinator at Advance Care Hospital since April 2003. Debra brings a twenty year career as a Respiratory Therapist in several different venues to her current position. These venues include acute care, sub-acute care, and rehabilitation. Happily married to an Orthodox Priest, Debra has traveled across the United States from Southern California to Pennsylvania and currently to Arkansas.

Debra was a young mother helping work in her husband's church when she chose to become a respiratory therapist. She was considering going into the medical field and chose the respiratory field because a fellow church member inspired her to do so.

"I wanted to get into the health care profession to help people. It was very important to not sit at a desk but to work one on one with people. It was for the reason of loving people that I chose respiratory care," said Debra.

Debra graduated in 1985 as a respiratory therapist from Orange Coast College located in Southern California at the top of her class. She has worked in several hospitals in her career including 7 years at Healthsouth Rehabilitation Hospital in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Her main goal while working has been to help people. Debra feels that it is her duty to provide a positive professional service to all people, especially her patients.

Debra described how much caring for her patients has inspired her. "It is amazing to me that I have tried to minister to patients when in reality, the reverse is true. They minister to me. My patients have taught me to be gentle, kind, and loving. My patients bless me with the fruits of the Spirit. At the end of the day I really feel like I have made a difference. I feel like I have helped serve my Lord and His people."

For many years Debra has proudly supported the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC). She is an advocate for membership. Recently she attended the national convention in New Orleans and was very impressed. Debra feels that too much hard work has been put into making the respiratory field as wonderful as it is today to waste the opportunity not to support the advancement of the field. She encourages all respiratory therapists to join the organization and to become a part of the process of growth.

Among her many duties Debra is the RT Council Chairperson for Dubuis Health Systems and has set many goals for herself and her staff. One such goal is to facilitate evidence based, patient driven protocols for her organization. She also wants to help all staff members attain the credential of Registered Respiratory Therapist and AARC membership.

While respiratory therapy is important to Debra, loving God is the basis for her life. She is married to Father John Maxwell, Priest of Saints George and Alexandra Orthodox Church, Academic Dean of Lylell College, and Chaplain at Saint Edwards Mercy Medical Center located in Fort Smith. The hats Debra wears are many. She is a Sunday school teacher, a mother, a choir director, a respiratory therapist, and supporter of her husband and his ministry.

Most people might feel overwhelmed with such a wide variety of duties both publicly and privately. Debra has this advice to offer to all “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you. *Matthew 7:12*.

Debra leads by example. I have known her for many years and she personifies professionalism and represents our profession well.