

School: Attended Illinois Central College in East Peoria, Illinois.

Current Role: Staff Therapist at Mercy Hospital of Northwest Arkansas

Day to Day Activities: Patient Care. Work all areas of the hospital. I am heading up the COPD protocol and education practices. Assist with bedside bronchoscopies .

First Job as an RT: worked as an RTA at Methodist Medical Center in Illinois during my last year of school. Upon graduating, I accepted a night shift position at St Francis Medical Center/Childrens Hospital of Central Illinois. I learned a lot during my time there. I was on the transport team and the 2nd shift team lead.

How being an RT impacts your current role: I enjoy the variety of responsibilities that comes with being a RT. One day may seem laid back and I have time to interact with my patients. The next day it seems like there are not enough hours in the day to accomplish my goals. I started out wanting to work with the pediatric and neonatal population. As I have gotten older, I find myself enjoying the older patients. COPD has become an important aspect of my job. I have researched the best way to help this group of patients. I am lucky enough to work with Pulmonology Doctors who support the efforts to help the COPD population.

Your view on the future of Resp Therapy: We need to continue to learn and research better ways to do things. Change is imminent. We need to position ourselves to where we are a necessity. So many times I have heard 'I am JUST a respiratory therapist'. I myself have said it. We need to change that and put ourselves out there and show the patients, other staff and the public (through community involvement) what we are capable of and how important our roles are.

Your biggest influences: My first big influence was one of my instructors. Pam Jackson. She would quiz us every day when we were in her clinical. I knew I had to be ready and just getting through was not an option. Once I started working, there were several therapists that taught me and showed me better ways. One in particular was a therapist named Steve Mott. He was respected by the doctors where I worked and he passed his knowledge on to me. I would like to say that I picked up all of it but, I do not have a photographic memory like him. I can say that I am a better therapist because of him. Here at Mercy, my influences are Dr. McKinney and Dr. Raza, our pulmonologists. They have helped me to better understand some of the complex cases that have come our way.

Pertinent info: Drive 4 COPD Chairman for Arkansas.