Nursing Excellence and Basketball—A Winning Combination

What do a 6’7” former professional basketball player and a Sentara nurse have in common? A lot more than you think when you meet Omari Peterkin, a “superstar” registered nurse (RN) at Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital. Omari is a recent winner of a Sentara Clinical Education Excellence Initiative scholarship which assists highly dedicated RNs with achieving a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN).

After pursuing his dream as a successful professional basketball player in Europe for several years, Omari and his wife settled in Virginia Beach. Growing up in a family of healthcare clinicians, Omari feels right at home in his chosen nursing profession. He understands that healthcare is a “team sport,” and his collaborative personality makes him a natural caregiver. Now, with a young daughter and another baby on the way, Omari and his wife have quite a busy schedule. He still finds time to volunteer as a personal trainer and life coach at a local high school. He has been honored as one of only a handful of employees out of 28,000+ with the Sentara ACE award for exceptional service to our patients. Clearly, his winning streak continues at Sentara.

Planning, drive and practice are all critical elements to achieving the ultimate goal, whether making a jump shot, or coordinating the care of a patient. Omari is not only accomplished on the court, but his patients find him to be kind, dedicated and compassionate. Being a high achiever, he already holds two Master’s degrees in Psychology and Sports Medicine; he is committed to advancing his nursing skills through the BSN coursework.

Omari possesses a thirst for knowledge and a commitment to excellence, and his warmth and compassion have earned this “gentle giant” rave reviews from both patients and coworkers. Working with patients, their families, physicians and other team members requires complex thinking and a strategic approach. For all of these reasons, we are most pleased to assist in his educational advancement.

Omari shares that he is honored to be chosen as a scholarship recipient and adds, “Thank you for playing on my team!”

Your contributions to the Sentara Clinical Education Excellence Initiatives support our nurses as they strive for education advancement to provide the highest level of care to our friends, neighbors and family. To find out how you can make a difference through nursing scholarships, please log onto www.sentara.com/foundation

Sentara Hospice House: Remembering a Community Leader and Dad

“I know you’re listening, but did you hear what I said?” That was a phrase that Noelle remembers her father saying many times over because it prompted her to dig deep within herself to fully comprehend the knowledge that he was trying to impart. David Monette was a man of substance who had meaningful ideas to share — a man who felt that giving...Continued on Page 2
Noelle Brown pays tribute to her father, David Monette, with a gift of compassion at the Sentara Hospice House

back to the community was a privilege that each of us could and should exercise. “When there was a need, people called my dad to help. I always knew that he was there for me and he provided that same level of dedication to our Suffolk community,” Noelle shares. Establishing the Nansemond-Suffolk Academy Art Show, he helped raise tens of thousands of dollars over 20-plus years to benefit the school’s fine arts program.

Noelle’s eyes light up when she remembers her dad and his devotion to their family. He was a man gifted in telling a story, bringing a smile to your face and sharing a laugh with friends. Noelle has continued her father’s tradition of making a difference through her acts of kindness. Noelle has been a loyal Sentara employee for over 18 years as a human resources consultant and brings her optimism to those she touches every day. Her generous contributions to the Sentara Hospice House make it possible to provide a place of comfort and dignity to hospice patients and their families saying goodbye. I think it’s safe to say that yes, Noelle was listening and she heard every word he said. ♦♦♦

Advancing the life-saving mission of Nightingale through Instrument Flight Rules (IFR)

It’s no secret that the Sentara Nightingale Regional Air Ambulance saves lives. You’ve read in our articles how important response time is after a serious car accident or life-threatening cardiac event. In its 33 year history, the Sentara Nightingale team has completed over 18,000 missions without an accident or incident. What you may not have thought about however, is the reason why. The Nightingale does not fly if weather conditions have the potential to affect visibility at any time. In fact, since 2012, the Nightingale has missed approximately 350 missions due to weather. Canceling a mission means that the fastest transport may not be available to a person whose life is in jeopardy.

Fortunately for all of us, your donations have taken the Nightingale program to even greater heights. Because of you, the Nightingale is being outfitted for an enhancement to assist in low visibility. This series of upgrades will transform the Nightingale from a Visual Flight Rules (VFR) program to an Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) program. The current VFR program requires the pilot to have visual reference to the ground at all times. An IFR program only requires the pilot to have visual reference to the ground during take-off and landing. You may not even realize it but all commercial airliners use IFR programs so it is a proven safe technology. For the Nightingale, the first part of the effort was to install the equipment in the helicopter which has been completed. Now the take-off/landing sites must be modified to communicate with the cockpit. Each of the five determined helipads costs approximately $20,000 to upgrade and we look to you for your continued partnership to make this a reality. Once the landing zones are outfitted, the Nightingale program will be a fully functional Instrument Flight Rules program. Weather conditions affecting visibility will be less of a deterrent and, as a result, lives will be saved.

If you would like to help us take the Sentara Nightingale Regional Air Ambulance to the next level, please call the Sentara Foundation – Hampton Roads at 757-455-7976, email Foundation@sentara.com, or go to www.sentara.com/foundation to contribute online. ♦♦♦

Thank you for supporting health in Hampton Roads in 2015.