

***Describe a meaningful achievement or a significant experience and explain how it relates to your field of study and your future goals.***

The essential interpersonal skills required of a nurse cannot simply be learned from a textbook, but rather these skills are acquired through hands-on experiences. My recent encounters with residents as a Certified Nursing Assistant working at a nursing home have proved to be the most fundamental experiences for my career in nursing.

The most meaningful interactions I have had resulted from going beyond the minimum level of care and taking extra time to be with residents. One of my first days of work, I was saddened to learn that a resident I helped during CNA training was actively passing away. With no family to sit with him due to Covid restrictions, I took time on my break to hold his hand and talk to him. I will never forget the heartbreak I felt the next day when I learned he passed away alone and that no one had checked on him for an hour because they were "too busy." Another time, I was floated to a different floor and stayed an extra hour to help feed a resident. His speech was difficult to understand due to his condition, so many aides rushed his cares without conversation. In the hour I spent with this man, I learned he had a PhD, he taught me his secret to a happy marriage, and he prayed over me. He made me laugh until I cried and cry until I laughed- a time I will always remember.

In my last day of CNA class, my instructor left us with the following thought: "Our job as care providers is to create change in the lives of the people we serve, but if you open yourself to the possibility, you will be surprised by the ways that the residents change you." Though I did not understand at that moment, I now realize that the person I am and the nurse I will become is profoundly impacted by my encounters with residents in the past year. It is my goal as a nurse to ensure that all patients are treated with the dignity and humanity they deserve.