Lesa Minnick The Backbone Of Utah State’s Nursing Program

09/17/2020

Lesa Minnick The Backbone Of Utah State’s Nursing Program

Uintah Basin nursing program coordinator plays key role in helping students earn their degrees

Being part of the nursing program has given Lesa Minnick confidence in the overall care of her miniature horses.

Just as nurses are the backbone of hospitals, Lesa Minnick is the backbone of the nursing program at Utah State University Uintah Basin.

As a program coordinator II for the Uintah Basin nursing program, Minnick plays a key role in helping students earn degrees from Utah State and land jobs in healthcare, but her hands-on attention to detail and personal experience lends to her unique approach helping support students.

Current and former students alike will tell you Minnick is the backbone of the nursing program at USU Uintah Basin.

“While I was in the nursing program, Lesa ran the show,” said former student Miranda Miller, who earned an associate of applied science (AAS) degree. “She had hands, eyes and ears on everything. “Lesa is an advocate for everyone. She always asked how we were doing, if we needed any help, and what she could do. She was the backbone of the program holding everything together.”

Miller now works in a wound clinic, and she attributes her success there to her training at USU.

“I help in the healing process with people who have wounds that can’t heal on their own,” Miller said. “The knowledge I have that I learned while at USU in my nursing program allows me to address my patients’ needs, and understand the disease processes they have.”

Minnick says helping nursing students earn their degree from USU takes a village.

“The students are my favorite part of the nursing program, but the nursing partners are the next best thing,” Minnick said. “The saying that it ‘takes a village’ is so accurate. We are such a great program because of the way our partners accept and teach our students. It is so amazing to be able to interact with such awesome people. Our faculty are working professionals, so our students get cutting-edge knowledge.”

Nurses comprise the largest single component of hospital staff, are the primary providers of hospital patient care, and deliver most of the care prescribed by physicians. Utah State’s accredited nursing programs offer both the AAS in nursing that prepares students for licensure as registered nurses and a 100 percent online RN-to-BSN program to help fill these roles. Students earning their associate degree receive hands-on experience in the state-of-the-art simulation laboratories that prepare them for real-world scenarios.

“Students graduate from our program with minimum debt, a quality education and amazing job,” Minnick said. “One thing I think is very important is that students that graduate from our program take the same test that many students spend four to five years getting ready for. Our students are successful after spending roughly three years, and our students are also able to work as LPN’s before completing their associate’s.”
Lesa Minnick The Backbone Of Utah State’s Nursing Program

Minnick began showing horses in the early 1990s

Bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) student Tara Callaway earned an AAS degree from USU Uintah Basin and now works in long-term acute care.

“Lesa was basically our bridge between the teachers and students,” Callaway said. “She was always there to help, because the teachers aren’t always on campus. She was always in her office, or on campus, and was the one who would give us clarified information when we didn’t understand what was going on.”

Former students say there are several benefits to choosing nursing as a career.

“I decided to become a nurse because of my love of people, and the fascination of the medical field,” Miller said. “It is amazing to be in a profession that truly makes a difference. I’m so thankful for the knowledge I have that in turn allows me to care for others. There’s nothing else I’d rather be.”

“Opportunities in the nursing industry are difficult to manage when you are new or have zero experience, but there are so many options for a nurse,” said Callaway. “Being able to work longer days, and have more days off, and making good money while still being able to enjoy life is amazing.”

Being part of the nursing program has not only helped many students achieve success, but it has carried into Minnick’s personal life, giving her confidence in competitions and overall care while working with her miniature show horses.

“Being with the nursing department has boosted my confidence to care for the animals – one of the main reasons we were as successful as we were,” said Minnick, who hopes to show dogs in the near future. “Before coming to work for the nursing department, I would call the vet for everything, but now, I feel confident in my abilities to help with gas colic, removing sutures, draining abscesses, packing wounds, treating eye infections – though I still suck at giving shots. These are things that I would be afraid to do before working for the nursing department.”

Working with the nursing department and local hospital obstetrics department has also provided Minnick with knowledge needed to help with birthing problems pertaining to her beloved animals.

“I have had several difficult births and had the skills to aid in a positive delivery and stimulate the baby to get it to breathe better,” Minnick said. “Turns out that animals and humans have some of the same problems. Once, I had a dog in labor and brought her in to work to deliver. I knew that if I had problems delivering the puppies, the students and instructors would help. This was after all the students had just finished their maternal newborn class.”

Minnick began showing horses in the early 1990s, and in 1998 a horse named Moss Groves Painted Lady delivered her owner’s first national grand championship. The following year, Minnick purchased a stud colt and filly, which went on to win national championships and numerous titles.

Minnick’s passion to help students and horses alike succeed is what makes the Uintah Basin’s nursing successful. For those interested in learning more about a career in nursing, visit nursing.usu.edu.

1. Statewide Campuses Home
2. News

Also from Statewide Campuses