

Long, rewarding path to LPN for Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone medication assistant

Mother of 4 juggled work, classes to better serve senior living residents

TYRONE, PA, UNITED STATES, December 13, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Cyndi Brooks is accustomed to multi-tasking in her role as a Medication Assistant at Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone senior living community. But her dream of becoming a licensed practical nurse (LPN) added another level of commitment and responsibilities to a busy schedule.

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Cyndi Brooks, LPN

A mother of four, Brooks embraced the challenge because she knew the hard work eventually would help her improve the lives of residents at Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone.

“I’m a very motivated person. I love what I do,” said Brooks,

who has been part of the IntegraCare team at Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone and had perfect work attendance for nearly five years. “I was working full-time here, then leaving straight from work, getting my daughter from daycare and my other kids from school and heading up to LPN classes straight from that.”

Those LPN classes were held at the Greater Altoona Career and Technology Center about a 20-minute drive from Tyrone.

“The end-goal kept me going, just getting my license and knowing I could do more for the residents here with my license,” said Brooks, 39. “I was also picking up a lot of extra shifts, so when I had down time, I could glance over my notes for school during my breaks.”

“I felt accomplished. It was a very long, long process,” she said of the two-year program that included four-hour classes on Monday through Friday nights. “Trying to juggle that and four kids. My boyfriend is in the military, so he’s gone a lot.”

Brooks’ hectic routine didn’t go unnoticed at Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone.

“Cyndi is the heart and soul of Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone,” said Dawn Karlheim, Executive Operations Officer at the senior living community. “Not only does she keep our residents in the

best physical condition possible; the level of empathy and support she gives to residents as well as other team members, make her a most cherished and valuable nurse and friend."

Brooks officially received her license in early December. She credited the IntegraCare leadership team at Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone for providing motivation.

"Miranda Coulter was my inspiration to go back for my LPN," Brooks said of the former Tyrone EOO who now is IntegraCare Director of Operations/Western Region. "With me being in the medication room and learning all the new things, I always felt like I could do more. I ended going up to part-time so I could pursue my LPN classes in 2020."

Coulter said Brooks always tackled her goals and looked at the big picture. Brooks initially held a role as a Resident Care Aide and then as a Medication Assistant, a duty she continues to fulfill at Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone.

"She is a one of a kind, a true gem. I welcomed Cyndi to my team in early 2018," Coulter said. "She had a spark and was wonderful with our residents. She showed genuine empathy and concern for our residents, which was very important to me as a nurse and as the Executive Director of Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone community at that time."

Coulter had insight into Brooks' challenge of simultaneously working, going to classes and caring for a family.

"As a nurse, I recognized Cyndi's desire to learn all she could," Coulter said. "She was always very hands-on and wanting to learn something every chance she got. She was a quick learner and I only ever had to show her anything once and she owned it."

"I had no doubt that she would chase her dream and meet her goal of being a nurse. Cyndi leads by example and is a wonderful advocate for our seniors."

Brooks is the mother of two boys and two girls, ranging in age from 4 to 20 years old.

"I think about it now and I'm like, 'How did I do this?'" Brooks said. "The team at Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone is special. Everyone chips in when they need to. The residents are



Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone resident Ethel Eutz and Medication Assistant Cyndi Brooks, LPN, share a moment at the senior living community.

wonderful. I love every single person here and they all know they can come to me for anything.”

The achievement meant a lot to Coutler, who beamed upon learning of Brooks’ receiving the official notification she was an LPN.

“I am so very proud of her, especially due to the challenges she faced while pursuing her nursing career,” Coulter said. “She worked beyond full-time, took care of her family, often while her significant other was on deployment with the U.S. military, and attended classes and clinicals. We are very, very fortunate to have her in the IntegraCare family at Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone.”

IntegraCare’s 18 communities located in three states are committed to providing excellent care to the residents. Excellent care begins with a compassionate team. And, the team at Colonial Courtyard at Tyrone takes great pride in creating an engaging and exciting work environment.

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