



Miles Community College
2715 Dickinson
Miles City, MT 59301
milescc.edu

Student Spotlight: Johnna DeLoach



Image: MCC Nursing Student Johnna DeLoach

A Passion for Nursing and a Legacy of Care

For Johnna DeLoach, a second-year nursing student at Miles Community College (MCC), the path to becoming a nurse has been a lifelong calling. Hailing from Terry, Montana, Johnna's journey in healthcare started at the young age of 16 when she became a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). Her passion for patient care led her to become an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and later, a clinic manager. However, her ultimate aspiration was to become a Registered Nurse (RN), a goal inspired by her mother, an MCC nursing graduate from the class of 2008.

A Lifelong Dream in Healthcare

"From the time I was little, I wanted to be a pediatrician," Johnna shared. "Since I waited so long to start school, I decided to go the RN route, which allows me to have a more intimate

relationship with my patients and provide more one-on-one care." Her admiration for the personal connections that nurses develop with their patients reaffirmed her decision to pursue nursing as a career.

Johnna's enthusiasm for nursing is driven by the opportunity to make a difference in people's lives. "The idea that I can help someone and make their life a little better is what excites me the most," she says. With a strong interest in emergency medicine, she hopes to work in an Intensive Care Unit (ICU), medical-surgical unit, or, ideally, an emergency department or trauma facility. "I loved my job as an EMT, and I would love to work on the hospital side of emergency medicine."

Choosing MCC: A Family Tradition

Johnna's decision to attend MCC was influenced by her deep-rooted connections to the school, as her mother is an alum of the MCC Nursing Program. "My mom is the best nurse I know!"

With her husband employed at MCC, Johnna became familiar with many staff members and felt confident that she would receive a top-quality education through the nursing department.

Beyond the academic challenges, she deeply values the relationships she has formed at MCC. She describes each class as a close-knit family, where even students from different years support one another. "Everyone wants each other to succeed and will do everything they can to help. It is amazing!" she says.

Overcoming Challenges and Embracing Rewards

Balancing nursing school with full-time work, family responsibilities, and clinical rotations has been one of the biggest challenges Johnna has faced. "I cannot lie, this is one of the toughest things I have done in my life. I work full time, attend school full time, and I am a wife and mother. It is hard, but I keep telling myself to push forward. This won't be forever, and things will get easier."

Despite the challenges, the most rewarding part of Johnna's journey has been making her family proud. She finds joy in setting an example for her children, showing them that no matter what obstacles life presents, they have the strength to overcome them and build a better future. She also firmly believes that every moment of this sometimes-difficult journey will be worth it.

The Heart of Nursing: Empathy and Compassion

Johnna believes that empathy and compassion are the most essential qualities in a nurse, recognizing that it takes a special person to provide the level of care the profession demands.

Johnna's journey has required significant sacrifice. She acknowledges the strain it has placed on her marriage, as the demands of homework and clinicals consume much of her time. It has also meant less time with her children and the use of all her paid time off for clinicals, impacting her family's income. To navigate these challenges, she prioritizes setting aside at least one hour each day to spend with her husband without schoolwork and makes a conscious effort to check in with her children about their lives.

Advice for Future Nurses

For high school students and most traditional first-year college students considering a nursing career, Johnna emphasizes the importance of preparation. "I think high school students and first-year students tend to be at an advantage because they typically don't have a spouse or children to fit into the equation. However, they need to understand that this program is not easy. It is in-depth and time-consuming, so be prepared."

She emphasizes the crucial role nurses play in healthcare, noting that they are often the face of the profession. Nurses are consistently present, providing care and building personal relationships with their patients. "Nurses are healthcare."

For those considering MCC's nursing program, her advice is simple but firm: be prepared to work hard. Johnna praises the help and encouragements she has received during her time as a student—from the Certified Critical Care Registered Nurses (CCRN)s to the instructors, all the way to the president of the college.

A Life-Changing Experience

As Johnna nears graduation, she reflects on her time at MCC with gratitude. "This experience has been one of the best in my life. I have made lifelong friends with my classmates and those ahead of and behind me. The staff has been some of the most caring and personable professors I have ever encountered. They sincerely want students to succeed but also expect them to work hard. This has been an experience I will remember my entire life!"

With commencement just around the corner, Johnna Deloach is ready to take the next step in her nursing career, armed with the knowledge, skills, and passion that will make her a compassionate and dedicated nurse. Her journey is a testament to perseverance, the

power of family influence, and the unwavering dedication required to succeed in the nursing field.