

In just three years, Olivia Marvel made the transition from a patient at Carle Richland Memorial Hospital to a housekeeping attendant in the hospital's Environmental Services (EVS) department to a certified nursing assistant (CNA) in the Medical-Surgical unit.

But that's not the end of her career journey at Carle Richland: She's in school to become a registered nurse (RN)—her ultimate goal—based on the support and care she received as a patient undergoing and recovering from multiple surgeries in 2021.

Now that care and support from her teammates and hospital leaders is helping propel her career forward. It's also an essential element of an organizational culture that builds and retains nursing staff amid a predicted shortage.

"So many different leaders of departments and my colleagues have inspired me and helped me along this journey to nursing school," Marvel said. "The nursing managers, coordinators and my unit leader have assisted me in reaching out for scholarships, scheduling around school, as well as just offering emotional support and being a sounding board whenever I need it."

Hired in February 2022, Marvel shared with her EVS leaders and teammates that she wanted to become a nurse. In response, they listened and helped her achieve it. Marvel became the inaugural recipient of the Nursing Education Award, made possible by donations to the Carle Richland Nursing Education Fund.

"Receiving that was honestly so shocking and heartwarming," she said. "I am so grateful because even besides just tuition, the books and other fees add up and become overwhelming so quickly. I am still working as much as possible while I go to nursing school this fall, so anything extra to help cushion my finances during that time so I can focus on my education is a huge blessing."

EVS Manager Drew Holdren said he knew Marvel would need assistance to get her nursing career off the ground. He told Marvel that Carle Richland could help her continue her education while she worked as a housekeeping attendant.

"I enjoy finding ways to help people better themselves," Holdren said. "When she came to me with her story, I knew I wanted to help her reach her goal. Other EVS team members have also been behind her, cheering her on as she moves forward with her nursing goals. They hated to lose her as a team member but know she will be successful in her nursing career."

Marvel has been an example in showing other EVS staff how you can move forward in your career, he said.



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