

Nurse Excellence

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Meet Amenze.

Can you tell us about yourself and what made your decision to become a nurse?

I grew up in Nigeria in an environment where family is everything to us. No doubt the person I idolized most was my aunt who worked as a midwife in the Metro Hospital, a prestigious facility back home. I used to watch her starched white garb, and I remember thinking that I want to wear those respectful clothes someday. She was surely the one evoking my passion to nursing. As I got older, my grandmothers health kept on declining and by the time I turned 16, I was the natural person at her side. I would do all nursing tasks that were required, helping her sit up, administer medication and everything in between. After four years, my grandmother passed away, but this experience remained with me, and I knew that I was destined to become a nurse one day. In 2016, I came to America with a goal to become a Registered Nurse. I attended AMG nursing school, simultaneously working as a PCT in Kings County

Surgical OR and sometimes in the recovery unit. It was difficult work . A friend of mine advised me that instead of working straight to my RN, there is a more balanced way up. First, you obtain an LPN license that enables you to earn a nicer salary, then you continue with school when you are ready. After working as an LPN for the past few years, I recently started pursuing my RN.

How do you manage mothering and Nursing both at once?

Boy, when you are bearing kids, you are like three years behind. Maybe more. Family is a priority to me, which is why I opted against the rigidity of working at a facility. I love the flexibility that working with homecare allows for. With a baby of 10 months, no two ways that the blankets and the bottles keep you busy. The hardest time for me was during Covid. I was expecting at that time. My sister, a registered nurse was working on an understaffed Covid Unit, and she kept on talking about the horror of hundreds of sick people, many who are dying. I was urging to quite my job with homecare to go save more people, but my doctor advised me against it. Also, I knew my patient needs me more than ever. People thought I was crazy that I was not sitting home protecting myself while collecting unemployment benefits, but I could not do that. It was impossible to back out of my mission in the time when the world needs me most. But I will not deny the challenge of working under COVID conditions, while being highly pregnant. For patient protection, I wore a double mask, but I could. not. breath. There were times that I nearly choked, so I took a little break in an empty room just to get some air.

What was your most difficult moment as a nurse?

When I was working as a PCT, I sometimes had to head into the operating room to bring equipment. Witnessing a live lung or heart transplant was more than I could handle. I felt like I have seen everything. I remember one particular day, when I got home after seeing this suffering and I told my husband that I am not going back. It is too much. But low and behold, the next day I was dressed and on my way to Kings Count again. I figured that if I closed my eyes, that does not take any problems away. Rather, I can do all that is within my realm to help those people who need it.

What do you like doing in your spare time?

Cooking is an amazing outlet. There is a certain satisfaction in feeding your family REAL food that you cooked with heart, instead of those greasy McDonald's calories.

Do you have any more family members in the nursing field?

My mother was a teacher in high school, and my oldest sister is a principal in one of the high schools back home. But the rest of us are all in the medical line. My sister is an OR nurse, we have a doctor in the family, some pharmacists; you name it. As much as my mom had the passion for teaching and she wanted to see us doing the same, she ended up getting so excited to have a medical family. I think she also feels safe knowing that we know it all especially as she is growing older.

Do you have a message for our devoted White Glove Community Care Nurses?

I sometimes hear nurses saying, "I am there to work with the patient not with the family." Truth be told, we must work with the families who share their home and space with us. Additionally, the family members may know techniques how the patient can be completely comfortable and working together is the best tool to optimize patient care.

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