

Amanda McGeachey '04: Bringing Joy and Care To Children Who Need It Most

BY EMMA DEANS

As a nurse at Boston Children's Hospital, Amanda McGeachey '04 works with children of all ages and diseases. "I anticipate going to my job like it's the day of the big game or, more cliché, like it's Christmas morning. It's that exciting to be able to help," she says. Amanda earned an accelerated BSN degree from Simmons College, a B.S. in Biology from Stonehill College, and previously served as a Research Nurse with a focus on clinical drugs and quality improvement studies for patients with Cystic Fibrosis. She worked on some of the initial trials for two of the biggest medications that have been discovered for the disease—ivacaftor (Kalydeco®) and lumacaftor/ivacaftor (Orkambi®).

"I have been exposed to healthcare my entire life—my mother is also a nurse and my father is a healthcare administrator. I have always been interested in going into healthcare in some capacity and my time working directly with patients as an Administrative Associate made me decide on nursing specifically. There are so many reasons I love my job; first and foremost, I literally go to work every day and get to spend time with children who, even on their sickest days, are resilient and happy. My job, sadly, places me in situations where families might be experiencing one of the scariest days of their lives. I use my skills and knowledge to attempt to make that moment less scary and terrible, while making their child feel better. It's a unique experience that I can truly say I look forward to doing every day.

"My time at TA shaped much of what I am doing today. The most influential part of my experience at Thornton was the ability to do and experience a variety of things. My favorite classes spanned from math to my orchestra class. I remember my Advanced

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Math class with Ms. Sheehan (now Mrs. Snyder); her

excitement about teaching the subject made math fun and interactive. I also loved my Spanish classes. Mr. Thompson

opened my eyes to creative and out-of-the-box ways of learning; he taught us Spanish through music and poetry rather than strictly rote grammar and speaking. Lastly, I always enjoyed my orchestra class with Mrs. Wilkinson. Learning music and musical structure is interesting and useful for many reasons, but it just taught me to love something plainly because it makes me feel good. I have learned that having a relaxation activity is key to recovering from my often emotionally stressful job. I still have a keyboard in my apartment in Boston and play it daily."



In December 2015 Amanda McGeachey received the DAISY (Diseases Attacking the Immune System) Award For Extraordinary Nurses. The award is given monthly to an outstanding nurse in more than 900 hospitals, including Boston Children's. It was established to recognize nurses for their personal acts of kindness and compassion provided to patients and their families.