

# A Calling to Care



Professionalism is defined as the competence or skill expected of a person who is trained to perform a job well. When this word is applied to those in the nursing profession, the definition is expanded to include caring, a quality discipline, integrity and an intense focus on the patients who have been entrusted to their care.

Daphne Heffler is the epitome of the professional nurse leader. Her exceptional career of both care for her patients and guidance to other nurses mirrors the core values of McLeod Health.

Daphne shares that while growing up in Loris, South Carolina, her parents were a tremendous influence on her decision to go into nursing. Her father instilled the value of each individual contributing through his or her life's work. Daphne watched and assisted her mother, who was the caregiver for her grandparents. She gained a deep appreciation for the value of caring for those who are ill, and she never really considered another career path.

Her early entry in the field led her to achieve her LPN license, but she hungered for additional education and training that would allow her to take on greater responsibility. Daphne's location at the time prevented her from pursuing this goal. When she moved to Florence, she completed her associate's degree in Nursing at Florence- Darlington Technical College and later earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from MUSC through a new program at Francis Marion University.

Daphne was drawn to McLeod because she wanted to care for the sickest patients. McLeod offered a year-long internship and she felt that this was an excellent opportunity to gain additional experience as she began her career.

As a nurse intern, Daphne realized her passion for Coronary Care. The focus at McLeod at that time was the new hospital under construction. There were exciting plans in the works to establish a comprehensive Coronary Care Unit so patients would no longer have to travel outside of the area for procedures. Daphne was excited to help plan the move and the expansion.

Daphne remained in Coronary Care until she retired in 2012 as Associate Vice President with 37 years of service to McLeod.

Upon retirement, Daphne made a very generous gift to establish an endowed scholarship to assist nurses who are working to complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Daphne and her husband, Dr. Joel Heffler, were inducted in the Dr. F. H. McLeod Legacy Society in 2013.

Daphne has always believed that through education and training, nurses can make a difference. Lack of scholarships delayed her training, so the Daphne Bazen Heffler Nursing Scholarship is yet one more way Daphne demonstrated her value of caring for the nursing profession.