

Bobby Joe Shell, RN, BS, MPA

I became a nurse because I started working in a small hospital at the age of 16 as an “orderly”. I think I was earning about 90 cents an hour. I liked it so much that I decided to become a nurse. The first time I “inquired” about becoming a nurse, the director of the program told me that I was a man, I should be a physician. The second time I applied which was three years later, I was accepted into the program. I have worked as a nurse for almost 30 years.

What I find rewarding about the profession is the sense of satisfaction I receive helping people. This may sound insincere, but I do get a personal sense of accomplishment helping someone overcome adversity. During my professional career I have worked as a staff nurse and in management. I have found that management is not the right choice for me. I have worked in a variety of areas but I have never worked in Obstetrics. I have recently given that area some thought but wonder if the timing is right. I don't know too many male Obstetrical nurses. I remember when I was in school that a patient in labor asked me to leave the room once she found out that I was a student nurse and not a medical student.

I have never regretted my decision to become a nurse. My wife Barbara is a nurse, we met in a hospital. My daughter Jennifer is a nurse, her husband is a nurse and Barbara has two sisters and a family friend who are also nurses.