

Florence of Clinton honored for being UMMC Volunteer



Special to the Clinton Courier

Mykaila Florence of Clinton gets ice for patients in the women and infants' hospital.

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Mykaila Florence of Clinton was recently chosen from around 1,000 other volunteers at the University of Mississippi Medical Center as one of this year's Volunteers of the Year.

Florence, who was chosen as the Batson Children's Hospital Volunteer of the Year, started volunteering at sixteen years old for one reason: "I wanted to rock babies," she said, laughing. Her mom told her about the volunteer program at UMMC, and so she started working at the secretary desk in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in Wiser Hospital for Women and Infants.

She never did get to rock any babies, but the work she did in the NICU and the third floor of Wiser made her realize she wanted to work with babies as a nurse, and eventually, as a nurse practitioner. "I loved it up there," Florence described. "The nurses were so friendly. They were so enthusiastic and happy to welcome me into their environment."

She is now a student at Holmes Community College on track to become a Licensed Practical Nurse. Florence gets ice for patients in the women and infants' hospital.

Part of her duties included taking the coffee cart around to patients

and their families. Among the memories she won't forget is taking coffee to the seventh floor of Batson Children's Hospital in the mornings.

"Seventh floor is surgery – that's where the parents are waiting on their kids to either come out of surgery or get updates. Seeing some coffee at eight in the morning looks pretty good to them compared to whatever their situation is," she described.

It was there she realized "I feel good making other people happy." Florence's role as a volunteer continued to change, and she stepped in to help fill a major hole when the volunteer service coordinator for Batson left the position over the summer.

Hannah Thompson, a customer service representative in the Office of Patient Experience, worked closely with Florence during that time.

"She was a very, very dedicated volunteer. I loved her work ethic," she said.

Thompson, a part-time employee, would often be limited by her hours and Florence would step in to complete the work that needed to be done, showing up at 7:30 a.m. to oversee things until Thompson came in at 9.

"She really wanted to be there because she loved to help," she said. "She's really ... a people person."

Health Fair attended by MC nursing students



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Mississippi College nursing students attended a health fair for faculty and staff. Among the student nurses were (l to r) Maggie Kate Wren of Madison, Emily Gray of Meridian and Shekela Leggett of Clinton. Leggett is a Clinton High graduate.



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