



Success in the Nursing Education Path

Bottineau, ND – April 7, 2020 - Vanessa Orlando knew she wanted to be a nurse after taking aptitude tests as a teenager. “It was clear that I loved science and was good at it, and that I was compassionate and empathetic,” Vanessa said. “So a career in nursing was an ideal choice for me.”

But the path to that career wasn’t initially clear. As a student attending a community college in Oregon, she took prerequisite nursing classes but was waitlisted for admission into the nursing program. “I was discouraged, because nursing was the most sought-after degree in the area. Even with a near-perfect application, it was common to get waitlisted the first year, or even for two or three years.”

In 2016, Vanessa moved to Minot, where her then-boyfriend and now husband was stationed at Minot Air Force Base. He encouraged her to look into nursing programs at Dakota College at Bottineau. “He had some friends who were in the two-year Dakota Nursing Program. They told me how you could earn an AAS and have the option of going on for a BSN later, and that the program was very accommodating for working part time while in school. Affordability was another factor for me in choosing the DCB program.” Vanessa enrolled in the fall of 2017 and attended DCB classes on the Minot campus and also took some classes online.

Vanessa’s experience in the Dakota Nursing Program resulted in both professional and personal growth. “I learned a lot from my instructors. My favorite instructor was a part-time intensive care unit registered nurse, and she really pushed me to think more critically and stop doubting myself. The medical surgical instructors were also amazing and incredibly knowledgeable. My experience at DCB was very positive and prepared me for a nursing career.”

Vanessa graduated with her AAS in May of 2019 and now works in the intensive care unit at Trinity Health in Minot. “While some days can be very challenging, my education at DCB gave me the tools to build the framework and fine-tune an overall understanding of the nursing practice. My advice for people deciding about college or a nursing career would be to work very hard but also be patient with yourself. People are capable of just about anything they put their mind to. Learn all you can in nursing school and figure out how to rise up to the challenge because someday someone else’s life will literally depend on it.”