

# **PIONEER PROFILES**



**IMAGE:** MCC Nursing Instructor Katrina Luther (right) with nursing student

## **Pioneer Profiles: Meet Katrina Luther**

MILES CITY, MONTANA: Katrina Luther grew up on a ranch near Brusett, MT in northwestern Garfield County. Her first “outside” job, though, took her all the way to the western part of the state, where she worked as a waitress and cook at a small restaurant in Clearwater Junction.

Her strong work ethic was shaped by both settings, and she has carried that, along with her “people” skills -- caring and gentleness-- to her position teaching nursing students for the past sixteen years at Miles Community College.

Luther’s teaching duties are many. She says, “I’m up early to prepare for lectures and make sure clinical rotations are going smoothly.”

A typical week for Luther includes a wide variety of instructional responsibilities.

“Monday and Tuesday are filled with lectures. Wednesday and Thursday are working with clinical skills, simulation, test prep and grading. Friday is test-day and catch-up day to prepare for the next week,” she explains.

It’s a heavy load, but one that Luther bears with dedication and joy.

When asked to identify what she likes most about teaching in MCC’s Nursing Program, Luther states, “The student interactions and watching students grow in confidence in themselves academically and clinically as a nurse.”

Luther can't single out one class she teaches as her favorite. Instead, she enjoys seeing students develop, stating, "Watching them progress through the scope and sequence in nursing and successfully master the knowledge at each level gives me as an instructor the motivation to teach with passion."

And, of course, Luther loves seeing her students graduate.

"The moment a student who has overcome many obstacles successfully completes the program and has been empowered to change the direction of their lives," is a moment that Luther especially treasures.

She adds, "Working here at MCC, the greatest achievement is listening to the stories of our students on Nurse Pinning night and how they have met their goal of finishing a degree in nursing."

Her students' achievements are ones with which Luther herself can identify.

"I was one of the first in my family to attain a master's degree. My dad would have been so proud. He didn't have the opportunity to finish high school, but he instilled the importance of lifelong learning in each of his 8 children. My parents celebrated our successes," she says.

When she's not teaching, Luther loves spending time in her garden and volunteering with community organizations. She also enjoys baking and hiking, camping, and fishing with her family.

And Nursing remains her passion.

Before joining the faculty at MCC, Luther worked many years in the field. Looking back at those times, she feels honored to have been part of her patients' lives.

"When doing bedside care, I had the privilege to witness so many births and sacred moments with patients. I worked with patients from birth to death," she says.

Passion and privilege; two vital components of nursing that Luther demonstrates in the classroom and in her students' clinical settings every day.

"If you keep the students and their success at the heart and focus of what you do," Luther states, "the rest will work itself out."

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