

PIONEER PROFILES



IMAGE: MCC Nursing Instructor Jamie Fontaine

Pioneer Profiles: Meet Jamie Fontaine

MILES CITY, MONTANA: Jamie Fontaine grew up in Billings, Montana, and from an early age learned to enjoy connecting with people and being part of a community. Her first job reflected that spirit—working as a hawkker at Cobb Field, now known as Dehler Park, selling concessions during baseball games. Today, that same energy for people and service carries into her work as a Nursing Instructor at Miles Community College.

Jamie has been with MCC for about a year and a half, and her days are filled with the steady rhythm of teaching, mentoring, and preparation that comes with training the next generation of nurses. Much of her time is spent preparing lectures and teaching courses such as pharmacology, pathophysiology, and anatomy and physiology. Clinical instruction and student support are also key parts of her role, helping students connect what they learn in the classroom with real-world nursing practice.

As she describes it, “A typical day involves a mix of teaching, student support, and administrative duties.”

Mornings often begin early with lecture preparation, followed by teaching and working with students in clinical assignments. Evenings are often spent grading assignments, planning upcoming lessons, and making sure students have the support they need to succeed.

For Jamie, the most meaningful part of working at Miles Community College is watching students grow.

“Seeing their confidence build and knowing I played even a small role in shaping their journey into nursing is incredibly rewarding,” she says.

Those moments—when students begin to believe in their abilities and step into their professional identities—are what keep her motivated.

One of her favorite courses to teach is pathophysiology. She enjoys helping students understand the deeper reasoning behind what they see in clinical practice. When those connections click, it creates what she calls the “lightbulb moment,” when complex information suddenly becomes clear and meaningful.

Jamie describes herself as empathetic, compassionate, creative, optimistic, and altruistic. Those qualities shape how she approaches both teaching and mentorship. Her advice to students and colleagues reflects that same mindset: “Be kind to yourself in the same way you instinctively are to others.”

When reflecting on her career so far, Jamie doesn’t point to a single milestone as her greatest achievement. Instead, she values the everyday moments where she can help someone feel more confident, supported, or capable than they did before. Whether it’s mentoring through a challenge, explaining a complicated concept in a clearer way, or helping build a positive culture during times of change, those small but meaningful impacts are what matter most to her.

Outside of the classroom, Jamie enjoys spending time with her family and being outdoors whenever possible. Camping, fishing, gardening, and reading are some of her favorite ways to relax and recharge. And while she enjoys teaching, she admits that if she had chosen a different career path, she might have become a librarian.

One adventure still on her list is traveling to Ireland, a place she hopes to explore someday.

Through her work at Miles Community College, Jamie continues to help students build the knowledge, confidence, and compassion they’ll carry into their future nursing careers—one lesson, one conversation, and one “lightbulb moment” at a time.

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