

National NURSES' WEEK

MAY 12 - 18, 2003

Nursing profession a natural choice for local twins

Twins Kristin and Ashleigh Duggan, who grew up in Stouffville, have always enjoyed doing things together.

Now, following in the footsteps of their mother, Carolyn, the two young women are about to embark on nursing careers. "We both made the decision to become nurses independently and we both want to get into different areas," noted Ashleigh, who plans to specialize in labour and delivery. Kristin, on the other hand, is more interested in honing her skills in the OR and the

emergency department.

"Having a nursing degree has opened a lot of doors," said Kristin, who was drawn to the profession when her grandfather was ill in hospital and was not getting the care she felt he needed and deserved. "Watching what he went through was a defining moment for me."

During Ashleigh's first year of training, she recalls working with a patient who had suffered several strokes. Staff were having trouble persuading him to cooperate



while they changed his dressing. "One nurse said we might have to put him in restraints, but I told him if he didn't stop, I was going to sing to him."

When he continued to resist their efforts, she started on the opening bars of 'You Are My Sunshine'. "His arms relaxed and he started to sing it back to me, and that's when I knew I was doing what I loved."

With many nurses approaching retirement, young graduates are much in demand in Canada and the United States. "We've had offers to go down to the States, but we have family and friends here and I'd like to stay and take a few more courses," said Ashleigh. "We have our whole lives ahead of us to travel."

And although they are sometimes asked why they didn't consider careers as doctors or specialists, they feel that nursing has allowed them to develop the special rapport with their patients which is very important to both of them. "I like to help people and make a difference, and nurses really get to know the people they take care of, as well as their families," said Kristin.

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