

Nurse Excellence

**Michelle Martinez Flores,
RN**

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Meet Michelle.

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

My family emigrated from Mexico to the New York melting pot back when I was three years old. We left behind our loving grandparents who were very involved members of our lives till then. Throughout the years we have kept up via facetime, and although it is not the same when they are so many miles apart, they still had a tremendous impact on our family. We are very family oriented, and I try to devote as much time possible to my dear parents, loving remote grandparents and two younger sisters of nine and twelve years old.

Let's talk nursing life. How did you get into the field?

Like I mentioned earlier, my grandmother was a very influential figure in my life. She worked as a mid-wife all the years, and I greatly admired her for that. From a very young age, I recognized many character traits we share which will make me a great caregiver too. By the time I entered high school, my mind was set on what I was doing, and although the trending thing amongst my friends was to join the police force and they tried convincing me to do the same, I had my heart on nursing. So, when my high school offered to an opportunity to join the Orange Ulster BOCES CNA training program, I was fully in!

Upon graduating from high school at the age of 18, I enrolled with the Orange Ulster BOCES Nursing Program. If you were a COVID nursing student like me, you know it was far from easy. We did not have clinicals towards the beginning of the program denying us from the hands-on experience. Plus, there was the difficulty of keeping yourself motivated without the seriousness of a classroom setting. Orange Ulster BOCES has a pretty high minimum grade point and getting kicked out was no option. At the same time, I had also worked in a facility as a Certified Nursing Assistant, and my two sisters were homeschooling, and they needed my help with the understanding. No, it was not easy but certainly worth it.

Was there advice you would have wished someone would have given you when you were still in nursing school?

Sometimes, you can get really thrown off by the air of knowledge the super experienced nurses carry. But never, ever get intimidated. Feel free to ask questions and be confident with yourself. Also, I was so glad that I got to join the Externship Program with White Glove. It was \$2000 worth of training, completely free, especially since I missed out on the crucial hands-on clinical experience. It lent particular importance to the course. The on-boarding was also amazing and honestly, if I can advise nursing students, I would tell them to make the great choice I made by joining White Glove as a new nurse.

How did you find the transition from working at a hospital to a homecare setting?

The period of adjustment was difficult. Taking the full responsibility of an ICU patient in the home setting is a challenge. Also, the nursing notes expectation is different. While in the hospital you need a rough and overall description per patient, in the homecare setting you create a detailed report of every breath of your patient and that is while being on duty. But still, I fell in love with the homecare lifestyle where you give your all for one patient. I was especially grateful that assignments are matched to be suited for your person and preferences. I was matched up to work with a girl my age, so we can relate to each other more than just a caregiver to a patient. She finds a friend in me, and I love the feeling of giving her a sense of normalcy in her environment.

Do you have a message you would like to convey to nurses all over?

We are all here with the same goals and it is great when we can support one another. Since I graduated nursing school, I have been helping numerous students pass their NCLEX and to provide them with much needed resources. I also try partnering them with the great nursing jobs I have explored at White Glove. And always remember, you are great, and you make a huge difference every day.

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