

Nurses Who Inspire: New Mexico Nurse Rachael Amble, MSN, RN

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Rachael Amble was drawn to medicine at a young age, but it was her high school volunteer work in a surgical intensive care unit that led her to pursue a career in nursing. She answered phones, ran labs, and spent time with nurses who welcomed her to shadow them. During that time, she recognized the way nurses cared not only for patients but also for entire families. Also observing compas-

sion in how nurses connected, comforted, and guided people through some of life's most difficult moments.

She became stronger as a nurse intern, where she witnessed very sick patients newly diagnosed with advanced cancers, those undergoing complex surgeries, and individuals receiving chemotherapy for the first time. Rachael saw that patients facing life-altering diagnoses need more than care; they need advocates, people to help them make sense of what's happening and what will come next. She believes patients deserve someone who will look out for them, especially when they don't yet know what questions to ask.

One of Rachael's most difficult experiences came when her father was diagnosed with brain cancer during her first year as a nurse. After finishing a night shift, she arose to multiple missed calls; her father was in the emergency depart-

ment, confused and not himself. The situation challenged her, as both a nurse and a daughter. However, in the process, she learned what it means to live with the uncertainty of the future, to care deeply, and to attain peace even during the most difficult of times. It is now ten years later, and her father is still alive, receiving hospice services.

For Rachael, nursing is also about what she describes as deeply meaningful, spiritual moments between patient and nurse. In those moments, she wants her patients to feel one thing above all else: You are safe, and I will take care of you. Her knowledge of these connections was shaped in part by her experience caring for her father, even during Hospice care. Against the odds, he lived ten more years. That journey strengthened her belief in advocacy, evidence-informed care, and appreciation for the resilient spirit.

She remembers how challenging it

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was to be a new nurse. How humbling it was to ask questions and welcome feedback. Her fortitude was tested again during the COVID-19 pandemic. Like so many nurses, she adapted to rapidly changing roles, often floated to work within ICU team models to assist other nurses, caring for patients in COVID units, and continuing her work in oncology. To her, nursing is never done alone. It is a team effort, grounded in trust and common purpose. She brings that belief into her work with students and new nurses, mentoring them with compassion and reminding them that they are not ever alone on their journey. She believes learning happens best when people are supported, safe, and respected.

In spite of the challenges, her passion for nursing remains steady. As her career

has progressed, she has transitioned to outpatient oncology. She begins each day in gratitude, thinking about the privilege of her work. Teaching and precepting have become especially meaningful to her; students' original thoughts and hope that continually renew her purpose. She also finds deep joy in connection with patients, families, and their stories. She takes time to learn what matters most to them, honoring not only clinical milestones but life moments: a new grandchild, a wedding, a return to everyday routines. These are the times that remind her why the work matters.

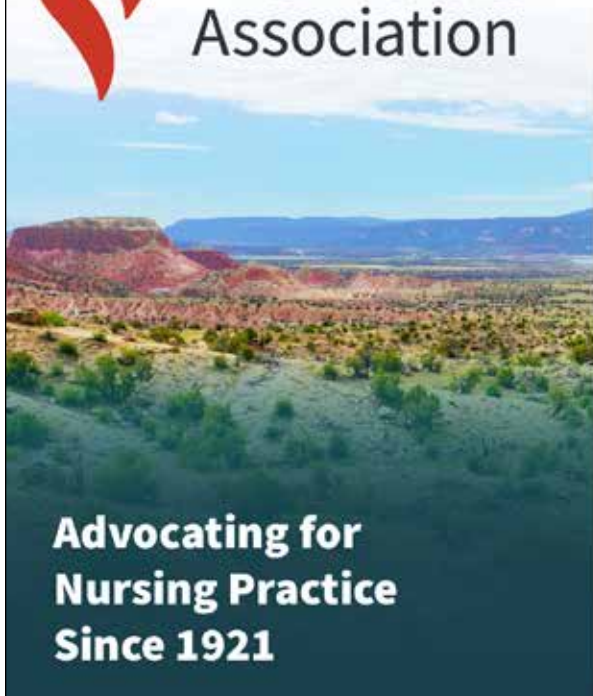
Her practice is rooted in New Mexico, a place she loves deeply. Having spent her formative years there, she values its cultural richness and strong feeling of community. She is committed to caring

for this population with compassion and respect, recognizing that cancer touches every community and calls for care that is both just and truly human. She values when previous patients return years later, thriving in ways that formerly seemed unlikely. These instances tell her that statistics never tell the whole story. People are far more than numbers.

At her core, Rachael remains curious, humble, and fully devoted to her work. She may not always have the answer, but she will always go find it. And in doing so, she continues to embody what it truly means to be a motivating nurse. ■



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