



Shriners NEWS & NOTES

Former Patient Now A Nurse At Shriners Philadelphia Hospital

(NAPSA)—Most people know that Shriners Hospitals for Children is a unique hospital system. Not only because they provide the very best orthopaedic and burn care at no charge to patients or their families, but also because of the people who work at these pediatric hospitals.

Take Ted Janeczko, R.N., for example. He is an individual who makes Shriners Hospitals a one-of-a-kind place to work. He is one of the newest members of the Philadelphia Shriners Hospital's nursing staff and chose Shriners because of a desire to give back to the hospital system that helped to save his life in 1987.

Soon after coming to this country with his family from Poland, 8-year-old Ted was wandering along the railroad tracks with a friend near his home in South Amboy, N.J. In an unfortunate incident, Ted touched a live wire that severely electrocuted him, leaving him with burns over 75 percent of his body. Doctors gave him just a small chance for survival.

For more than two weeks, Ted's life hung by a thread as he lay in a coma. He had to spend more than eight months in an intensive care setting.

In the meantime, his family and friends rallied around him. They held a blood drive and a number of fund-raising events to help with Ted's escalating medical costs. During this time, a Shriner approached Ted's brother and Ted was transferred to the Shriners Hospital in Boston.

Over the next 16 years, Ted had more than 200 surgeries. That's

equivalent to almost one surgery a month over that period of time. But Ted is proud of never missing school or falling behind while in the hospital. Though his family and friends were very supportive throughout his ordeal, he said it was his father who really encouraged him to push on and work harder. As Ted explained, "If it didn't kill me, it made me stronger."

When Ted finally became an outpatient and needed to return to the hospital for follow-up treatment, he would hop on a plane, fly to Boston for a clinic visit and fly home the same day. So, at 20, he decided to move to Boston because of the number of surgeries he still required.

Shortly after getting married nine years ago, Ted decided to attend nursing school. His experience as a patient and his previous work as a paramedic helped to finalize his desire to become a nurse. Upon earning his nursing degree, he applied to several hospitals, including the Philadelphia Shriners Hospital. After spending several years at another hospital, the opportunity to join Shriners beckoned.

So here he is today, working in an environment as a caregiver—a far cry from the days he spent in the burn hospital as a patient. As a nurse, he has a close working relationship with the patients.



Ted Janeczko, R.N., one of the newest members of the Philadelphia Shriners Hospital nursing staff, is giving back to the hospital system that saved his life.

"Kids have so much resilience," Ted says. And that is something he also has—an inner strength that has forced him to look forward rather than backward.

If all patients would follow his lead, they would be better off because of it. As he says, "Try not to focus on the things you've lost; be thankful for what you have and things will look better."

For more information on Shriners' network of 22 hospitals that provide medical care and services totally free of charge to children with orthopaedic problems, burns and spinal cord injuries, write to: Shriners International Headquarters, Public Relations Dept., 2900 Rocky Point Dr., Tampa, FL 33607, or visit the Web site at www.shrinershq.org. Treatment is provided to children under age 18 without regard to race, religion or relationship to a Shriner.

If you know a child Shriners can help, call 1-800-237-5055 in the United States or 1-800-361-7256 in Canada.