

Commitment to *Give Back*



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I am a first generation college graduate, who lived with my mother, younger sister, and cocaine-addicted father for the first fifteen years of my life. *I promised myself that my children would never see the drug abuse, domestic violence, and co-dependence that I saw.* This was the main reason that I decided that I needed to go to college.

I graduated from San Jose State University with a BS in Nursing and a minor in African American Studies. *I was named Student of the Year by the National Black Nurses Association.* While working full time as a nurse, I received my MSN from California State University, Dominguez Hills and was chosen as an emerging leader of the Association of Women's Health Nursing.

My philosophy on my place in nursing is very simple. *I believe that as a staff nurse I can help one patient at a time and as a nursing instructor, I can teach future nurses and indirectly help many patients, but as a nurse researcher, I can exponentially increase the number of people I help by disseminating my research to help shape nursing practice.* The nursing profession has opened doors for me that I never knew existed. My desire to give back to the profession stems from my gratitude for all that has been given to me.

To whom much is given, much is required.

In addition to volunteering in leadership capacities in my professional organizations, *I established a mentoring academy for high school students who desire to pursue a career in nursing and a scholarship for students in my former high school who enroll in a registered nursing program.*

Currently, I am a Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellow at UCLA in the Ph.D. program in Nursing. My present research interest is teen pregnancy prevention.

