

Male Nurses Becoming More Commonplace in Medicine

OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony College of Nursing sees uptick in male students

He primarily worked construction. Even owned his own business for a dozen years. Eventually, Darin Hagenmeyer got tired of it and wanted to pursue his first passion - being a firefighter.

He soon discovered, however, that breaking into the ranks of the first responders was tough. So, he selected nursing because it was still in the medical field.

Hagenmeyer, now a second semester senior at OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony College of Nursing, has no regrets about the decision. He admits it hasn't been easy, but says that's a good thing.

"We're constantly pushed," says Darin Hagenmeyer, second semester senior at OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony College of Nursing. "Our instructors push us, whether it's in the classroom or the clinical setting, to become better and learn more. Sometimes it's frustrating. But, it's also, I think - being in the working world previously, for quite a few years, and knowing what it's like and what expectations are from other people out there, I think it's better for them to push us hard. Then we're not going to be as nervous going into a field that's going to push you pretty hard. So, I just think we're going to be better prepared."

Hagenmeyer will soon add to numbers that have been steadily climbing the last few decades. At only 3-percent in 1970, the number of male nurses across the US is now around 10-percent.

And that growth will continue, as interest in the field among males is even higher in nursing education.

"Saint Anthony actually has a registration of about eleven percent of our students, both at the undergraduate and the graduate level," says Sandie Soldwisch, President of OSF Saint Anthony College of Nursing. "Whereas, most nursing programs are struggling to get about an eight percent average."

Soldwisch says males are finding nursing as fulfilling a career as their female counterparts. She also says, like Hagenmeyer, a number of the male students are seeking a career change and chose nursing because it's stable and people-oriented.

"For example, we have a student who recently began his program - he has been a mechanic for 13 years," says Soldwisch. "But, he decided he prefers to work with people and make a difference in a person's life. Although, mechanics certainly do, because they have safe cars - this gentleman chose to become a nurse because he wants people to have a safe life."

That's confirmed by Hagenmeyer, who says, aside from being a passion, he also chose nursing because he wanted to come out of school with a job.

Registration is open at OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony College of Nursing. Learn more at www.osfhealthcare.org/sacn.