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Beyond the Bedside: Transforming Healthcare Space

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and Laura Rossi, BA

Laura Rossi (LR): Thanks for taking some time to meet and talk about your professional journey at UCSDH. As part of the Education department, my colleagues and I are often asked about how nurses transition throughout the organization in unique roles, including Information Services (IS). I reached out to ask you to share a bit about your experience and route that lead you to your role in IS.

Lilian Chan (LC): Of course, I'm happy to share my story!

LR: Great, let's start at the beginning. What inspired you to choose nursing as a profession? Did you always want to be a nurse?

LC: Before I wanted to be a nurse, I wanted to do interior design, which has nothing to do with nursing. I liked the idea of like creating and curating a space, making it fun, while making people feel at home.

That said, I happened to also be really good in science. My mom is a nurse, which also inspired me to go in that direction.

I decided to try everything as I found a connection between interior design and nursing. I felt like nursing was that kind of gateway to creating homes for people. Improving their well-being, their life, often by making them feel at home, away from home.

When I was in high school, I did a

lot of volunteering in hospitals. Back in the day they called volunteers candy strippers. I really enjoyed that and liked the idea of knowing that as a nurse, you have the ability to impact people's lives by making them feel a certain way in that space. I think it's very easy for people to come to the hospital and just think of it as a hospital. You get to be the one that helps patients feel better in their body and space, and that's why I felt like nursing would give me fulfillment, where, for me, interior design couldn't.

I did consider other areas of care, such as pharmacy, but I felt that might be too isolating, I wanted to work directly with patients as it seemed to suit my personality.

LR: Was technology in nursing something that always interested you?

LC: I was drawn to the fact that nursing was much more hands on and I thought it would be a great profession, so I started my undergrad around 2011. It was perfect timing because, at that time, there was more innovative technology in patient care becoming more readily available. It was really cool.

I was getting excited because these new concepts and state of the art hospitals were popping up that didn't look like traditional healthcare settings.

LR: So what were your first steps into



Laura Rossi, BA is the UC San Diego Health's Nurse Engagement and Retention Program Manager. With a Bachelors from the School of Communication at Michigan State University, Laura has worked for the Nursing Education, Development and Research Department since 2017. Laura refers to herself as a "Nurse Concierge", taking great pride in providing multi-level support, resources and recognition in an effort to improve the working experience of all nurses at UC San Diego Health. Feel free to reach out to her with questions Inrossi@health.ucsd.edu.



Lilian Chan, DNP, RN, PCCN-K is a graduate from the University of San Diego: Data Science and Nursing Informatics Doctorate of Nursing Practice Program. Additionally, Lilian also graduated from Johns Hopkins University with a Master in Nursing: Health Systems Management. Lilian has worked as a registered nursing with the University of California: San Diego, specializing in trauma step-down patient population. Given her experience as a registered nurse, Lilian has utilized this time to apply evidence-based practice principals regarding opioid withdrawal identification and management with clinical decision support and electronic medical record implications. In combination with her clinical and academic experience, she has now been able to utilize a mixture of electronic-medical record applications, nursing education, and evidence-based practice processes to ensure nursing is well-equipped with taking care of a multitude of acute care patient populations.

perusing your nursing career aspirations?

LC: Well, I graduated in 2015, from the University of Central Florida, and frankly, the weather didn't do it for me, so I headed to San Diego. My first nursing job was as a new graduate nurse at Sharp. That's where I was began testing out my interests between oncology and trauma.

At Sharp Memorial, I served as a level 2 trauma nurse and fell in love with trauma. I liked that fast paced kind of nursing.

And also, being on the trauma team, you feel more closely connected to the community. These patients are people who are coming in on likely one of the worst days of their lives, and not expecting to come in, due to literally a traumatic event.

I really liked being around that patient population, a lot, so I was inspired to really amp up my skill and experience with trauma.

LR: What brought you to UCSDH?

LC: Well, actually right about that time, I had decided to apply over at UCSDH, which was right down the street. I was especially excited as it was my first time working in a teaching facility. I got to work side by side with my peers, nurses and residents who were around my age.

So, it was really cool to be in a situation where I was learning to care for people with other people who could really relate with my passion and experience level and were just as excited as I was to get into the trauma field. One big draw to UC San Diego Health was that it was an academic teaching hospital, a place where I could learn, felt comfortable asking questions, making mistakes, and exploring.

LR: Where did you begin your UCSDH journey?

LC: I was so excited to be hired as a nurse on the Hillcrest 5 West team, which was a trauma step down unit. I was part of that team for 4 years. During my time on 5 West, I put myself out there and challenged myself. During my last two years on the unit I worked as a charge nurse and resource nurse and really enjoyed that

experience.

LR: What drove you to explore other areas of UCSDH?

LC: At that time, I found myself infatuated with learning. I don't know what came over me. I loved bedside nursing, but I thought it was time to revisit why I became a nurse. I was thinking that I'd like to explore my practice at a more advanced level, thinking about spaces, programs, and quality improvement. I ended up going back to school for my master's at John Hopkins in health systems management, which connected all the dots.

My program was basically project management for nurses, which included an opportunity to learn how to create a safe space for your patients.

Getting my masters was a great investment, but it reminded me of the reason I chose this profession in the first place. My program taught me skills to design, enhance, and ultimately, improve the patient space, experience utilizing data and metrics. It made me reflect on my original passion for home design and I found it related well.

LR: How were you able to land in Nursing Informatics?

LC: The last semester of my master's program, I was able to choose a director to work under, as long as they were at a system level overseeing both Hillcrest and La Jolla. I ended up choosing the Director of Nursing Informatics. Under that IS tutelage, it really hit me, I thought "Wow! *What I had dreamed to accomplish as a designer, I am able to accomplish in nursing by building "homes" or better space and experiences for our patients through my work in IS. I get to make innovative accommodations and improvements utilizing technology!*"

It was a full circle moment for me, and it keeps me excited and grateful for my position. Additionally, I get to work with the newest technologies on a daily basis which is really cool!

LR: What do you like most about your current position?

LC: I see myself and my colleagues of

informaticists as artists. I get to see, feel and touch what nurses see thanks to technology. I get to rearrange and redesign that technology, to make it nurse friendly or patient friendly. That's what I find most exciting, the feeling that I am creating a welcoming space that improves our nurses and patients experience.

So that's how I transitioned from the bedside to this role as an informaticist. It is all thanks to my instinct and passion to get back to school. I'm also grateful for the push that people I was surrounded by gave me!

LR: Sounds like you found your design job after all! Can you share a bit about what resources at UCSDH you utilized to help propel your professional development?

LC: Sure! I was really involved with our Evidence Based Practice Institute which really reinvigorated my passion. It connected me with so many other nurses who were like me, wanting to improve processes and make a difference.

Also, I made sure to partner with my manager, to create space and time so I could take advantage of that programs and trainings. And I made sure to utilize my annual 40 hours of education pay! The Patrons of Nursing scholarship always helped offset some of my education expenses.

The Nursing Education Department offers the Nursing Professional Development Fund which I took advantage. Those funds helped me attend the Biannual Sigma Theta Tau conference which was cool because I got the opportunity to meet other nurses from around the world who shared my same mindset and passion.

I was, and still am committed to our Shared (Professional) Governance. At that time, I was an active member on the Nursing Cabinet and as part of my team's Unit Based Practice Council. From there I joined the Clinical Practice and Informatics Council which had a huge influence on me. Being a part of that group that allowed me to see other analysts, who were also nurses, creating and implementing their work in tandem with the nursing education team and our front-line nurses. That was really impactful on me

because I got to see them create the products that I was seeing and using every single day! I just thought that was super cool.

LR: So what's next for you?!

LC: Well I really love where I am now. I work with a fantastic team and I feel like my work is important and I'm able to continue to create, and that really excites me. This time in healthcare is especially unique as we continue to explore the possibilities of AI! There is

so much incredible work to be done!

But regarding my current work, exciting innovative changes in healthcare are definitely in store, you never know what's around the corner! That's exactly what makes my role in Informatics so engaging! UC San Diego Health prides ourselves on next level innovation which is why I love being here so much! We get to improve our nurses and patients experience as technology enhances and what I can tell you is, what's coming down the pipeline is going to be super exciting!

Untitled, by Ten Mendoza, DNP, PMH-RNBC

