



Courtesy of Jeanine Rapp

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## Life-changing encounter creates bond between nurse and chaplain

When Jeanine Rapp woke up on September 17, 2017, she knew something was wrong. Little did she know she would soon be in the Emergency Department at AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center La Grange fighting for her life.

When chaplain Robert Dabney arrived for work at the hospital that same day, little did he know he would witness a miracle — and make a lasting connection.

Earlier that morning, Rapp, a 49-year-old nursing student, believed she was dealing with bronchitis symptoms that had

progressed. But four minutes after arriving at the hospital, a blood clot caused her to go into cardiac arrest. Dabney was on duty and answered the code to provide spiritual support in the ED.

Despite 90 minutes of CPR, Rapp was struggling. Medical staff told Dabney and Rapp's boyfriend to bring her two daughters from the waiting room to say goodbye to their mother.

Rapp spent several days on a ventilator in the ICU, receiving many hours of dialysis for kidneys that were shutting down. At

the same time, Dabney spent many hours offering prayer and comfort to the numerous family members who continually occupied the ICU family room. When Rapp began to recover and was moved to a different unit, Dabney followed. "At that time, she was day-to-day," he said. "No one knew if she would recover, and it was a very hard time, especially for her daughters."

"After I was awake, Robert would visit me every day, and I couldn't thank him enough," Rapp said. "He was fielding groups of people coming to see me, and my daughters came to love him."

To the surprise of many, Rapp was discharged in October, and back at nursing school in January. On September 17, 2018, a year to the day she arrived in the ED, Rapp walked into AMITA Health La Grange to begin work as a nurse with some of the same people who saved her life. "It's crazy to work with doctors who shake their heads in amazement that I'm standing here," she said.

Last fall, Rapp accepted her boyfriend's proposal of marriage. One day, while caring for a patient, Dabney passed by. "I chased him down the hall to ask if he would officiate our wedding ceremony," said Rapp. "I told him I would be so honored because he took such good care of all of us."

Rapp and the man who loved her through her near-death experience were married March 23, 2019. "To think I was here for the code and able to help the family, then Jeanine ends up working here and asks me to officiate... It's amazing," said Dabney. "In their most difficult and most joyous of times, I was able to play a part in the life of this family. God truly has everything intricately planned and we just stumble into His miracles." ■

Julie Busch, associate vice president, Communications, AMITA Health

## Connecting theory and practice

This past May, six graduate students and one undergraduate had the opportunity to spend nearly four weeks in Madagascar on a study tour hosted by the Community & International Development Program (CIDP) at Andrews University. Of the seven students, four were pursuing their CIDP degree and three were working on their social work degree. Over the course of the tour, they spent most of their time in Madagascar's capital city, Antananarivo, visiting key players working in the development, humanitarian and social work sectors. They also assessed activities and organizations in Tamatave and visited the local rural clinic in Foulpointe.

The goal of this trip was to give participants an opportunity to observe development and social work practitioners in the field, and bridge the gap between the theory learned in the classroom and its practical uses in communities.

While on the tour, each student took two courses, Poverty Analysis & Reduction Strategies and Humanitarian & Development Practice. The first examined urban and rural poverty, the causes and consequences of poverty, and the various sources and means of anti-poverty programs. The second dealt with issues addressing the challenges, ethics and principles of humanitarian and development work.

In addition to completing their coursework, students went on daily site visits with humanitarian and development organizations, including local non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies and government departments. Each of these

organizations contributes to the anti-poverty and development work in Madagascar.

During these site visits, students were given a chance to apply content from their classes. They primarily observed how the organizations worked as practitioners but also were able to conduct a needs assessment in a rural village called Ambatolampy. They used a participant observation method which allowed them to collect information and interpret it from the local population's point of view. For graduate student Danielle Barnard, this was her favorite part of the trip. "It really solidified for me that I made the right decision to join this program and pursue this field," she says.

The students also were able to partner with several groups on four different projects: distributing shoes to a rural school, providing relief materials and equipment to a shelter and rehabilitation center, visiting an eco village, and helping children who needed medical treatment. "This year, the

emphasis was on using the four principles of humanitarian actions: humanity, independence, impartiality and neutrality," explains Joel Raveloharimisy, trip leader, associate professor and director of CIDP.

In their free time, the students enjoyed spending a few days on tourist activities, such as visiting a local lemur park to learn about Madagascar's plant and animal life, and enjoying time at the beach.

Overall, this tour helped students such as Danielle see where they can fit in the humanitarian-development continuum. "I have the personality and heart to spend a decade working toward small systemic changes in an area, whereas other classmates want to be on the ground during conflict and provide immediate assistance during distress. Both are necessary."

Raveloharimisy notes that the purpose of this tour was to teach students about sustainable goals and the humanitarian purpose of "leave no one behind." He says, "We had three weeks to learn from observation and actions. It was a great tour." ■

Hannah Gallant, University Communication student writer



Courtesy of Community & International Development Program

▲ Madagascar study tour participants stand in front of the U.S. Embassy.