

Part of My Journey

Chantal's story

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Chantal (center), works alongside fellow PT students during the 2016 free service clinic for community members, hosted at Andrews. (Photo by Darren Heslop, IMC staff photographer)

By: Becky St. Clair

Seek Knowledge

When I was 8 years old a man jumped into the pool and landed on my dad's neck. My dad sunk to the bottom of the pool and couldn't move and all he could do was pray. By nothing short of a miracle he somehow managed to make it to the surface and finally convince people he really needed help.

Every girl imagines her dad to be invincible. My dad is 6' 4" and all my friends marveled over how big and strong he was. In an instant he went from invincible to not being able to walk or sit for long periods of time without pain. It broke my heart, and I wanted to help.

As a senior in high school, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life. Somehow I heard God say "[physical therapy](#)," so I went to Andrews. My first anatomy and physiology class confirmed I was headed in the right direction. I loved everything about the class, the program and Andrews.

The need for physical therapists is obvious. People complain about back pain, shoulder pain, neck pain, and we have the knowledge and skills to help. Physical therapy is so awesome because we don't need many tools to help people. We just need our hands. It's so simple.

In the Bible, the first thing Jesus does to many people who come to him—the cripple, the blind man, the leper—is touch them. That touch has already made an impact and only then does he give them the physical—and more, importantly, the spiritual—healing they need.

I want to do what Jesus did. I want to apply his methods to my work. Yes, I'm going to help you with your decreased motion, and you may have other struggles, but I empathize with you and we're on this journey of healing together.

Now when I go home I can help my dad. I can teach him ways to keep himself as pain-free as possible. God brought me to the place where I could fulfill the dream I had at 8 years old, and it's been an incredible journey. I'm learning so many amazing things and I want to share and apply them. I want to use what I've learned and use my hands to go and worship God wherever he needs me.

Affirm Faith

The ugliest tree on campus is across from the Seminary. It's the last tree to get all its leaves in the spring and the last to lose them in the fall. You can actually climb inside of it. There a natural teepee and you can just look up and see the branches winding around and reaching toward the sky. I often go and sit inside that tree and pray and welcome the Sabbath on Friday night. Just sitting in the peaceful quiet with the birds.

Andrews is where I learned to enjoy fruit picking, birdsong, wildflowers. I learned to appreciate snow and cold and the burning wind that blows on your face between classes during the winter. It's amazing to think God created all of this for us, and I'm thankful.

Andrews fosters better people. It fuels relationships with God and brings people together around common interests and goals. Whenever I leave campus I realize just how present Christ and his angels are on the Andrews campus, and I miss it.

Change the World

The first sermon I heard after arriving on campus was one by [Dwight Nelson](#) in [Pioneer Memorial Church](#). It wasn't a warm fuzzy "welcome students" sermon like you'd expect. I remember Pastor Nelson saying, "You're here because our motto says to change the world, and that's what you're going to do. We'll give you a foundation and show you how to have an even better relationship with God and how to experience him in different forms of spiritual expression. Then you'll take your unique abilities and go and change the world."

When I was 10 years old I wanted to be a medical missionary. So as a college student I knew I wanted to be a student missionary. I told God of my desire and admitted to him that I didn't know when or where, but that I expected him to show me.

One day I was sitting in my dorm room, having my morning worship, and I said, “Okay, holy spirit, I want to be a student missionary. Where should I go?” The holy spirit said, “Go to Turkey.” I frowned and said, “Holy spirit, do you realize that’s a really random place?” And the holy spirit replied, “Maybe to you. But that’s where I want you to go.” So I looked up what kind of volunteers they needed in Turkey and discovered they needed a Spanish/English teacher. In shock, I said, “Lord! I speak English. And I speak Spanish. I can go to Turkey!”

In the culture class we take as part of the prep for serving as an SM, they emphasize embracing culture. It wasn’t anything about stomping over and showing how superior our approach to life is. We were taught to go with an open mind and see what they can teach us. God has already been there, and they’re ready, he just needs people to go and work. We need to be the seed-planters and start something for him because we all want to go home.

Related Links

- [Physical Therapy at Andrews](#)
- [Learn more about being a student missionary](#)
- [Get involved at PMC](#)

Contact:

PR

pr@andrews.edu

269-471-3322