

# Butler County Health Care Consortium to laud BC3 RN student

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Marissa Marsh, 27, of Herman, a Butler County Community College registered nursing student shown Jan. 24 in the college's nursing skills lab, will receive a Health Care Student of the Year Award on Thursday from the Butler County Health Care Consortium.

(Prospect, PA) A Butler County Community College registered nursing student employed as a certified nursing assistant will receive one of two inaugural Health Care Student of the Year Awards from the Butler County Health Care Consortium on Thursday in Prospect.

Marissa Marsh, 27, of Herman, will be among 20 health-care employees, volunteers and students to be lauded during the 17-year-old consortium's second Health Care Worker Recognition Event, scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the Atrium.

The honor reflects the goal of the 30 health-care employers who are members of the consortium, and the group's resource partners, to establish a means to identify those who, among other

criteria, exemplify excellence in providing care to area residents, said Mary Salony, secretary of the consortium and assistant director of the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board, Butler.

“The Health Care Student of the Year Award recognizes that employers appreciate people going into the field,” Salony said. “It also shows that you are the top in your program. And certainly in the job search, it does not hurt to have an award or an honor.”

Marsh enrolled in BC3’s associate of applied science degree program in registered nursing after earning a bachelor of science degree in an unrelated field in 2013 at a Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education institution.

Marsh, who has worked for 30 months at Concordia Lutheran Ministries, an assisted living facility in Cabot, said she is “not usually one to stand out in a crowd. I kind of stand back. So this is really an honor.”

### “A great commitment to all her patients”

As liaison between her class of BC3’s registered nursing students, and the program’s faculty and the dean of the college’s nursing and allied health division, Marsh solicits suggestions from her classmates – often using online survey software – about how to improve students’ experiences at BC3 in classes, labs and clinical experiences, Patty Annear said.

Marsh herself spends two days a week in clinical practice at Allegheny Valley Hospital in Natrona Heights as part BC3’s program and “has wonderful leadership skills,” said Annear, dean of BC3’s Shaffer School of Nursing and Allied Health. “She is a very professional woman, very conscientious about her studies and serious about the profession. And she puts 100 percent into everything that she does.”

Marsh shows a “great commitment to all her patients both on and off the clinical units for BC3,” Annear said. “This is evidenced by her holistic approach to care for her patients not as a disease process and learning opportunity, but also as the individuals they are.”

That holistic approach reflects “treating your patient as an individual, not as a number or believing that every patient is the same,” Marsh said. “Everybody has different needs. It is about understanding what every patient needs individually, approaching it that way and giving them the 110 percent care that every patient deserves.”

Following her graduation from BC3 on May 15, the former Westmoreland County resident intends to pursue a position in wound care or in critical care, or as a flight nurse – and in Butler County, where, she says, job opportunities in her field “are immense.”

“You can go anywhere,” she said. “You can go anywhere and work for anyone and do everything, regardless if it is pediatrics or geriatrics. There are ample opportunities.”

Ninety-four percent of BC3's registered nursing graduates have passed the National Council Licensure Examination in the past two years, exceeding the state average of 84 percent, Annear said.

## “The job outlook is very good”

Registered nursing is expected to see a 15 percent increase in jobs through 2026, a percentage deemed to be “much faster than average,” according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“The job outlook is very good” in Butler County, Salony said. “There is a great need for nurses at all levels in all fields. I had an employer in here just the other day who is desperate for nurses. A lot of students have job offers before they graduate because of their clinical experiences.”

The health care and social assistance industry employed the highest percentage of Butler County workers in November at 16 percent, according to the most recent data available from the state Department of Labor and Industry's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis. Butler County's 659 health care and social assistance companies were the most in comparison to other industries.

Marsh's said her work as a certified nursing assistant includes assisting patients with “activities of daily living, helping them ambulate, get up and get ready for their day.

“Helping them,” she said, “with their daily living.”

Taylor Keith, a student in Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School's health assistant program, will also receive a Health Care Student of the Year Award.