



# MedStar St. Mary's Hospital

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## Then and Now

**As part of our hospital's 100-year anniversary, we are taking a look at Then and Now by highlighting a hospital associate who has been a valuable part of our history in each issue of The Pulse.**



Just a few weeks before her initial interview for a patient care assistant position at St. Mary's Hospital, Gail Thompson broke her ankle. Now working at the hospital more than 20 years later, she's grateful the position was held for her until she was able to walk. Today, Gail is a guest relations associate in the Emergency Department (ED).

On any given day as a greeter in the ED, Gail said "I meet a lot of interesting people" and she's on a first name basis with many of the "regulars." Her job can be tough, but Gail is there to grab a wheelchair for someone in need; to calm family members and patients who are waiting to be seen; and to determine the acuity of each patient's illness or injury when they enter the waiting area.

But long before Gail was greeting patients in the ED, her work as a patient care assistant had her cleaning patient rooms, setting out linens for the next day and "mopping the hallways every night from top to bottom. We would even take the ER stretchers outside every night and hose them off."

Determined to better herself, Gail earned her certificate as a nursing assistant. After that, she worked a few years on the A

Unit - known today as Telemetry. "I always loved working with Telemetry patients,"

and she had a knack for remembering everything about each patient she cared for without having to refer to a chart. But stresses in her family led Gail to take a position as an evening patient transporter. She didn't stay put long, and would soon work to open the Copy Center where she worked for a few years before taking on her current role.

"I've always enjoyed a lot of the people who work here," said Gail. And it was those same employees who rallied together to raise money for her family when they lost their house in a fire. "The foundation I live on today is from the hospital employees... it was the exact amount needed."

Gail and her husband, Charles, are proud supporters of Bluegrass for Hospice where Charles and his band, "Bottom Country Bluegrass Boys," play to raise funds. Gail's other joy are her grandkids, and she's one proud mom of her son who used to work at the hospital in Dietary and is now a lead engineer in Washington, D.C.

