



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.



Both Joy Corpus and St. Mary's Hospital Laboratory have made noticeable changes in the past 23 years. And "what changes" they have been, according to Joy, who transitioned to St. Mary's from two much larger hospitals in more urban settings.

Prior to St. Mary's, Joy was working at Providence Hospital in D.C. and at Reston Hospital Center in Virginia. So, when she started at St. Mary's, the Laboratory here seemed "behind times," especially in the use of instrumentation. "When doing complete blood counts, we used to use the old hand clickers and manual dip counters. Then we would total things up and enter the results manually on a card." She said that technicians in the lab at the time were often bent over pipettes for whole blood counts. "It seems like we were always using pipettes for things then, even for some sperm counts. Thank goodness for the arrival of computers, she exclaimed.



Joy started at the Laboratory by working a 12-hour night shift staffed by herself and a phlebotomist. "As the tech, I helped out by drawing blood in the ICU and the ER." She liked working with the patients but didn't like working nights and admitted to being scared. She was happy to next move to the evening shift. Today, she is comfortable "working any shift."

Anyone who knows Joy knows that she loves everything about the hospital. She is happy with the way things are today and has embraced the changes experienced in processes, instruments, computers and software, staffing and communication, including rounding by administrators. She welcomed the growth of the county. "When I first came to the area, I think there was only one K-Mart for shopping," she said. "I told my husband Caesar that I didn't think I would enjoy being here." (Caesar worked as the head of Environmental Services at the hospital for two years in the early 1990s.)



However, 23 years later, she is glad she stayed. "The Lab is my family," she said, although she also has nieces and a stepdaughter who work at St. Mary's. "We have great teamwork. I love what I do and I enjoy being on the Diversity Committee and leading Lab Week celebrations," said the Filipino native whose formal name is Ligaya. In translation, Ligaya means "joy plus happiness."

And that is exactly what she encountered working at St. Mary's Hospital.