Vada Watson

Assistant Director of Resident Health Services

Martha Nell Beatty

Raised in small-town Ohio, Vada was the oldest of seven.  She was the only child of her parents until eight when her first half-sibling was born.  She is 27 years older than her last sibling.  Also had  God  parents she was close to and their children were almost like siblings.

In her junior year of high school, Vada was able to start nursing studies and before she was 17, Vada amazingly qualified as a CNA.  Her first job in nursing was in a geriatric facility, where her mother was head cook.  At 18 ,she qualified as an LVN. Her first job as a nurse was in a geriatric psych facility.  At the same time she started studies at the University of Akron in 2012. After a couple of years of nursing and college, Vada decided to join Americorps, a domestic version of the Peace Corps. She was boots on the ground in disaster relief with FEMA.  She particularly remembers being all over Texas in 2015, when there were massive floods. Vada determined she wanted to finish her BA in social work so she returned to Ohio to complete her studies and finished her BA in 2018.

After completing her bachelors Vada moved to working in children’s services, where she was an in-take specialist.  That meant knocking on doors of homes were there were allegations of child abuse or assault   During her time there, she was trained as a forensic interviewer focused in addressing potentially challenging abuse cases.  Then Vada moved to Virginia Beach in 2019, where she used her LVN and social work training.

In 2021, Vada moved to San Francisco at the height of Covid.   She got a job with San Francisco Community Clinic Consortium and found herself in the middle of the Tenderloin with tent- lined streets.   She was a program manager and part of her duties were hiring staff and coordinating volunteers.   The group had medical staff/ volunteers (Vada included) that provided outreach to the unhoused.   Partnering with obstetric providers, they started a maternal health program that reached out to pregnant unhoused women who were “lost to service.  “ They also started a pilot program in geriatrics focused on connecting clients to primary care.

While she was with the Consortium Vada got her MA on public administration in September of 2022.  Being the program is normally two years, she moved on to a job with Bay Area Community Services, which is predominantly in the East Bay.  The group provides psychiatric medical management for those who were unhoused or partially housed.  Vada had been working in street medicine for over two years and realized she was burnt out although the experience was remarkable. “You can only spend so much time watching people where you can’t fix things.”

She transitioned back into geriatrics working for Morningstar. In San Jose.  Not being from the area, Vada did not calculate that it might take 2-1/2 hours one way to get to her job from the East Bay.  Commuting to The Heritage from the East Bay seems really easy.  And we’re so lucky to have her

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And in her spare time:  Vada sews clothes, makes jewelry, and quilts.  She has a passion for hiking as well as photography. Vada has had showings in galleries the most recent being in a Lower Haight gallery.  She is also a prolific reader and was pleased she completed Stephen King’s Dark Tower series.

Time for sleep?    Let’s hope Vada works that into her days.

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