



Meet Nejlja Atiyeh, RN, BSN Henry Ford Health System 2016 ANGEL OF MERCY



Nejlja has made a significant impact on patient care at Henry Ford West Bloomfield by educating her co-workers and colleagues about the cultural differences of the Arab community to deliver culturally sensitive care to Arab patients. Nejlja is outstanding in difficult patient care situations.

Once, one of Nejlja's patients was actively dying and required frequent medication administrations in order to keep the patient comfortable and make the patient's transition painless. She took extra care to dim the lights, and created a soothing environment by play relaxing music. Nejlja held the patient's hand, made sure the patient knew that the family was present, and that the patient was not alone. Nejlja explained each stage of the dying process to the family at the bedside. She also sat with the family answering their questions, providing tissues, and refreshments. Due to Nejlja's interventions, a patient, struggling before, passed away peacefully. She then ordered a refreshment tray for the family members and other visitors. She is the living, breathing embodiment of what a competent, compassionate, caring nurse should look like.

Nejlja works a second job in home care so she can make a greater difference in the community outside the hospital. Nejlja has also organized two different fundraisers for Syrian refugees with all the donations going to refugee resettlement. Her latest fundraiser was showing a film at Emagine Theater about the conditions in Syrian refugee camps. She spent weeks distributing flyers in the local communities and had a turnout of over 60 people. She is successful raising awareness of the plight of the Syrian refugees through her tireless efforts.

"Working with Nejlja has enhanced my own nursing practice," says her nominator Jason Wolfe Greer. "She has shown me how to maintain professionalism and compassion through her leadership and dedication to nursing every day. I can think of no more deserving nurse that embodies the tenets of the Angel of Mercy award. Nejlja is truly an angel to the hospital, her community, her coworkers, and the Arab community."

Nejlja holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Oakland University and is an RN.