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BOUNCING TO A DIFFERENT BEAT

How an investment
banker found his
calling as a CNA



For 25 years, **Ralph Phillips** woke up each day, put on a suit and tie, and went to work at an investment management firm, of which he was the proud owner. However, after his father was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, that all began to change.

Ralph's father battled Alzheimer's disease for 10 years, and towards the end of his dad's life, Ralph became more involved in the medical and day-to-day aspects of his father's care. From doing things like taking vitals, administering medication and drawing blood samples, Ralph not only learned that **he had a knack for providing care**, but that **he enjoyed that type of work**. This realization changed his life. To spend more time with his father, Ralph sold his practice and some years after his dad's passing, Ralph made another life changing decision – he decided to become a certified nurse's aide (CNA).

"I wanted to find something that I thought would be particularly meaningful and useful, so I decided to become a CNA," said Ralph.

In order to begin his new career, Ralph needed to properly prepare for the job, so he enrolled in the **CNA Training Classes offered at Presbyterian SeniorCare Network Oakmont**.

After completing the course and graduating, he began working at **The Willows**, the skilled nursing community at the **Presbyterian SeniorCare Network Oakmont campus**, where he has been part of the team for almost one year.

Since his career change, **Ralph has found his life's purpose**, easily recognizing the importance of the work that is done by Presbyterian SeniorCare Network employees, noting, "We have a real opportunity to fundamentally affect the lives of our residents and their families, and to improve their quality of life."

He believes that working as a CNA is both a **rewarding and impactful career**, and he wishes that more people would recognize that and consider a job as a CNA.

Perhaps a bonus that ties to Ralph's decision to sell his business and help care for his dad – he was able to coach girls basketball and volleyball, both sports in which his children play. Ralph says, "My dad's sacrifices when we were children made it possible for my brothers and I to participate in sports. When I sold my business, I was able to share my love of sports with my children by volunteer coaching." The basketball he tosses is signed by all of the Mary Queen of Apostles girls he coached in 2014 – a very sentimental heirloom.

Ralph's life has certainly changed over the last few years, but he's not slowing down. His passion for caring for others and his love for the job **led him to the decision of returning to school to become a registered nurse (RN)**. He begins school at UPMC St. Margaret on September 4.

As he pursues licensure as an RN, Ralph is reflective of his work and how he got to this point in his life.

"Peace of mind is a very important part of this work. I've been in their (the families) seat, so I know what it's like to have to try and manage care for someone that you love," said Ralph. "You lose perspective when dealing with your own loved one. Here, I get to keep perspective and make a positive impact on the residents and their families.

That's why I love my job."



"Be compelled to help others for a living. Our residents have lived through and experienced so much in their lives – they deserve the best care we can possibly give them."

~ Ralph Phillips