

Sinai Hospital March 2012 Superstar: Keyera Simon

Keyera Simon, a graduate of VSP's Healthcare Careers Alliance (HCA) program, was selected Sinai Hospital's March 2012 Superstar. She is, indeed, a young woman "on the move." Keyera works full-time as a Sinai Patient Transporter and attends Sojourner Douglass College. She maintains an 18-credit course schedule, while caring for her 18-month old son. This motivation and drive appear to be some of Keyera's long-standing qualities.

While overcoming many personal challenges and assuming an adult role in her family well before adulthood, Keyera is mature beyond her years. By the time she entered the HCA program, she came with significant work experience as a dietary aide at a retirement community and as a warehouse clerk (a position she maintained throughout the HCA program).

Based on a recommendation from a friend, Keyera and her sister both applied to the HCA program, met all eligibility requirements, and began to receive training in April 2009. Keyera, a Western High School graduate, expressed interest in a number of occupations. She knew she wanted to enter a "helping profession" and considered both social work and health care management.

The HCA program, a Sinai-based two-phase training program comprised of job readiness and occupational skills training, allowed Keyera to develop life and work management skills while preparing her for healthcare industry employment. Keyera observed that "HCA helps people explore what they want and gives people the skills to work anywhere." Keyera described how valuable the topics of career development, time management, networking and interviewing were to her during job readiness training.

During seven weeks of Sinai-based occupational skills training, Keyera was initially assigned to the Environmental Services department but quickly realized her strong interest and need for patient contact. She was transferred to Central Transportation where she valued VSP's support in the areas of "good communication, the separation of personal from work life, and the importance of care and honesty," especially within a healthcare setting. In June 2009, upon program graduation, Keyera was offered permanent employment as a Patient Transporter, initially part-time and then full-

time. Keyera enjoys the fact that her current position has given her the opportunity to interact with patients through her job duties and to observe the relationships her peers develop with patients and others throughout the hospital.

After three years of work experience and much thought and deliberation, Keyera has decided that nursing is "her calling." Her co-workers cannot agree more with her decision. How do we know this? Here are some Sinai GIDC unit co-worker comments about her:

"She honors Sinai's mission statement by supplying excellent, family-centered customer service to every patient she encounters.

All of these attributes help the flow of our unit."

"She is an example of professional work ethic; she sets the bar for others to emulate her to assume the same amount of pride in their position. She never complains when asked to perform a task."

It sounds like Keyera has all the necessary qualities to become an excellent nurse, and these qualities will certainly make the transition a natural next step for her. Keyera has applied to Sojourner Douglas' School of Nursing and plans to begin classes this summer. She certainly is a woman "on the move," and we wish her continued success as she travels down her self-determined path.

