

Yavapai College News

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YC Verde Valley Alumna of the Year finds joy in midwifery career

On the eve of her recognition as the Yavapai College Verde Valley campus Alumna of the Year, 1997 Yavapai College Nursing Program graduate Stephanie Purinton was only able to close her eyes and rest for about one hour.

She wasn't nervous or anxious about accepting the award. Rather, she had spent most of the night and early morning hours preceding the Evening of Recognition event delivering one baby and monitoring the progress of a second.

"I sleep a little bit here and a little bit there," said the certified midwife and women's health nurse practitioner, explaining that sleep deprivation a few days a week does little to quell her enthusiasm for her job. "The only time I miss a birth is when I'm out of town," she said. "It's very hard for me to leave my moms."

Purinton discovered her passion for women's healthcare working in obstetrics at Verde Valley Medical Center in Cottonwood and Sedona. That passion earned her the 2017 Yavapai College President's Outstanding Alumna award. "Yavapai College played a vital role in her career and in many respects contributed to expanding excellence in health services for women in the Verde Valley," Dr. James Perey, executive dean of the YC Verde Valley campus, said of Purinton.

Purinton gave YC's nursing program high marks, saying the hands-on training and focus on patient care made the transition from student to professional life a smooth one. She often recommends nursing to women who are expecting and new moms who are weighing their career options. "I tell them to go to Yavapai. Get your nursing degree. It's the best job you can have and still have time for your family."

A Camp Verde High School graduate and mother of two, Purinton had discounted labor and delivery specialization early on in the nursing program at YC. "I didn't think I could be objective and provide excellent care," she said.

She couldn't have been more wrong, considering that she now owns and operates Bella Vita, a women's healthcare clinic in Cottonwood, delivers 200 Verde Valley babies a year and has dedicated her career to making the birthing experience as positive and memorable as possible for her patients.

"I love what I do. I love every birth and being with women. I get to make a difference in how they feel about their births."

Purinton earned her midwife certification in 2009 and just a year later, added women's health nurse practitioner to her credentials. She pursued the masters-level certifications, she said, so she could do more for her moms-to-be than she could as an RN. "I wanted to be able to offer women a different choice in their birthing options."

Midwives, Purinton asserts, develop a relationship with their patients, spend more time with them and collaborate with them on a birthing plan. The result -- "being a part of an amazing day for families" -- is pure joy, she said.