

Jodie Williams

Class 1977-1979 Nursing

I graduated in 1979 in the 10 year nursing class. I then went on to obtain a BSN and MS from Arizona State at Tempe. My career has been very rewarding and I am pleased to say I worked for the Veterans Administration Medical Center, right here in Prescott, AZ in various nursing positions for 30 years. I retired in 2009 and am now working part time as a travel nurse for veteran patients.

While I was at the College, Dorothy Carothers, Joanne Allegre, Wanda Burkhart, Anatomy & Physiology professor and Dr. Ken Abbott all significantly impacted my studies in a most positive manner.

I have four children, two of them are also Yavapai alumni, Andy Williams and Susan Williams Dandos. My oldest daughter, Lisa Williams Sisco is regional marketing director for Dominos Pizza; Sharon Williams Rendon is a high school math teacher in Rapid City, South Dakota. Susie Williams Dandos teaches 2nd grade at Christian Academy of Prescott. Andy Williams is a free lance sports referee and manages a private casino business in the Phoenix area. I have nine grandchildren, each one a delight. I love spending time with them - we read, hike, camp, go to movies, cook, do crafts/scrapbooking/photography and many other activities together.

I love to travel and have been to Germany several times. I was fascinated by Italy, Switzerland and Austria though I want to go again as there was never enough time to see all the things I wanted. My most recent adventure was a trip to Bosnia with a group from my church. We worked with a staff at the Operation Mobilization Community Center in suburbs of Sarajevo, Ilidgia and Dobrinja. One of the major activities we participated in were cleaning, painting, refurbishing a neighborhood amphitheater and then conducting neighborhood gatherings for a week with crafts and a film festival each evening. We also held

a kids day camp activity in a beautiful park; gave assistance to a homeless family moving into a permanent dwelling; conducted an evening games/music/story time for kids in a parking lot surrounded by large apartment buildings full of kids.

My plan for this summer is a trip to the northwest and up into Canada then back through Glacier National Park. It is a pleasure trip with a friend. I will be gone most of the month of August.

I currently serve on the Alumni Outreach Board and was on the Committee that planned the 40th Nursing Reunion. It was great fun seeing many former classmates. I would love to hear from you, so drop me a line.

My email address: wjoella@hotmail.com

Jodie Williams - The President of the Alumni Outreach program receives a prestigious award.

ACHIEVERS: Retired Prescott nurse earns lifetime honor



Matt Hinshaw / The Daily Courier

Ken Hedler, The Daily Courier

PRESCOTT - Joella "Jodie" Williams entered the nursing field as a single mom at the age of 40, and spent 30 years with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs here before retiring in 2009.

Looking back, Williams, 72, said she felt awkward at first entering [Yavapai College](#) surrounded by nursing students young enough to be her children.

"I did not know if I could compete with these young kids, or even pass the class," she said. It took adjustments because she had not attended a school since graduating from high school in Bisbee in

1957.

However, Williams described her classmates as being supportive, and remains friends with some of her former peers.

She earned an associate's degree in 1979, the same year that her only son, Andy, graduated from Prescott High School. She accepted an award for Outstanding Clinical Student.

Hitting the job market, Williams chose working for the VA instead of accepting a job in obstetrics at Yavapai Regional Medical Center in Prescott.

"I thought I wanted to deliver babies, but I fell in love with old people," she said with a laugh.

She started with the VA in intensive care, and rose through the ranks to assistant chief nurse, finally retiring as a clinical educator. She also earned bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing from [Arizona State University](#).

Williams has no regrets while acknowledging red tape and the federal government shutdown in 1995 prompted a number of nurses to leave.

She stayed with the VA, she said, out of a sense of patriotic duty.

Her commitment paid off in professional recognition. The Arizona Nurses Association, which has about 1,700 members, named her the Outstanding Chapter President in 2007.

The association recently honored Williams as a lifetime member.

The nominations for the honor came from chapter president Karyn Poole of Prescott and Jeannette Sasmor of Sedona.

"She embodies all the values and work ethics of our honored 'Silent Generation'

nurses," Poole wrote. "For all she has done and continues to do, she has my gratitude and respect, and that of AzNA, the veterans in our community, and their families."

Since retiring, Williams has worked part time administering written tests for an agency that tests certified nursing assistants.

She also serves as the nurse representative on the Council of Electors for Yavapai Regional Medical Center, on the advisory board of Nurses Network and as alumni outreach representative for the Yavapai College Foundation.