

Rianna Mitchell

Award for Excellence as a BSN Preceptor 2022

"As nurses, we're always learning and...working with students can be just as educational for me as for them!"

Rianna Mitchell obtained a double major from the University of Victoria in Science (biology/microbiology). She started Kinesiology at UBC before finally deciding to pursue nursing at BCIT.

During her time out of school she worked in retail management, which she credits with giving her a strong leadership foundation that she continues to refer to when working with students.

She says, "I was 30 when I graduated nursing school so it's definitely never too late to start!"

Rianna shows incredible commitment to her students' learning processes.

Before starting the placement, she connects with her student, introducing herself and providing an opportunity to get to know one other over coffee. She uses this time to discuss expectations and learning styles. Students have indicated that this informal meeting dramatically reduced their level of stress.

Rianna consistently demonstrates an excellent commitment to teaching;

- She asks questions about different surgeries or patient histories to promote critical thinking; and
- She finds positive ways to challenge students, allowing them the autonomy to make critical thinking decisions about their patients' care
- But she also checks in with them frequently to ensure they are feeling supported.

In addition, she encourages attendance at education sessions held on the unit such as troubleshooting chest tubes or how the Mental Health Act intersects with patients who may need surgery.

Further, Rianna shows commitment to excellence in practice. Rianna picks up multiple shifts to ensure her students' hours are met and is flexible and willing to reschedule shifts in special circumstances. She has demonstrated great clinical competence and professionalism while simultaneously ensuring her patients feel safe, comfortable, and cared for. She is reciprocal with feedback, just as willing to take advice as to give it, making the preceptorship feel like a partnership.

She says, "When it comes to sharing knowledge, I think it's important to point out that as nurses, we're always learning and I absolutely do not know everything. I think it's extremely beneficial for both my student and me to seek out answers to questions we don't know together - especially on a busy surgical floor with patients with all kinds of injuries, illnesses and complications."

Rianna Mitchell is clearly a dedicated nurse, preceptor, and role model for her students and a fitting recipient of the 2022 Bachelor of Science in Nursing Preceptor Award.

