

RN Student Loan Forgiveness Program 2023

Essay Tips and Tricks

- Tell your story. Why did you become a nurse? What makes you proud about your time as a nurse? What have patients told you about the care you've given them? Personal touches are memorable and important to share in an essay.
- Describe your connection to your community. Do you provide culturally competent care to a population of patients who are often marginalized or overlooked? Do you live in the community where you work? What makes that connection meaningful to you and your patients?
- Explain why you care about where you work and why you'd like to continue working there. Describe how you have contributed to your community through your work.
- How does your work impact outcomes for your patients?

Essay Examples

- 1) I practice in the Emergency Department of XYZ hospital, a large urban facility. I became a nurse to work with my patients to help them produce a plan to meet their health needs and goals. I am proud of the work I do when patients come to me in their most vulnerable moments, often after a traumatic or painful experience. I believe my nursing care can make the difference, so their time in the ED is less scary and impersonal and they feel like they have an advocate who will help them get the care they need to heal. When my patients feel included in decisions about their care, and trust the person providing their care, they are more likely to adhere to our treatment instructions and recommendations when they go home, resulting in fewer return visits to the ED and better overall health.
- 2) I am a Black nurse in a large urban Labor and Delivery unit, and I am often the only medical professional my patients see who looks like them. Many of my Black patients experienced poor care from the healthcare system in the past and are often so relieved to see me because I understand their experiences. They are grateful that I understand their needs and respect their wishes without needing additional explanations or education about their cultural background. Minnesota has high rates of maternal and infant mortality among Black patients. I believe the care I provide is crucial to ensuring my patients have better outcomes. I'm proud that several of my patients have come back to visit on their baby's first birthday, to say thank you, and show off their children.
- 3) I practice in the med/surg unit of a small rural hospital. I also float to our small ED. I have seen nearly every type of patient over my time at XYZ hospital. I became a nurse because I lost a beloved family member to cancer when I was young and was so inspired by the nurses who cared for her before her death. I am proud that when patients come through my doors, I meet them with compassion and understanding, and I am there to help them meet their goals. Some of my patients know that their time is near and are relieved to have me there to hold their hand and let them know they are not alone. During the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, I was with many patients when they passed away, and because visitors were not allowed, I was the only person there as they took their last breath. I believe the nurse's role is not only to provide the medical interventions the patient needs but to tend to their emotional needs. I am grateful I was able to be with those patients, and I hope my care provided them comfort.
- 4) Over the last several years, I practiced in several different mental health units at XYZ hospital. I have extensive experience working with patients who have a mental health diagnosis and substance use disorder. My patients need compassionate care, free of stigma. Too often they are judged by their family, friends, and coworkers for their mental health struggles or their addiction, and by the time they come to me they feel hopeless. I am most proud when I can say that my patient left the hospital with more hope for the future than when they entered. Addiction and mental health can be lifelong challenges, and I believe the care I provide will help many of my patients move on to the next step in their life with the tools to be healthy and make good choices and plans for their future.
- 5) I work in the ICU at XYZ hospital with the most critical patients. Over the time I have been practicing nursing, my patient population has become much sicker, coming to me often after delaying care or skipping medications due to costs. During the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic I volunteered to work in the COVID-ICU, which was the biggest challenge I've ever faced in my career. Before we had adequate PPE and vaccines, I sacrificed my own health to care for these patients because I felt it was my duty. I came home at night and changed clothes in my garage so I wouldn't bring any germs into the house to my spouse and children. I saw so much suffering during that time, and I wasn't sure if I could keep going. Now that we are past the worst of the pandemic, I'm glad I am still here to care for my patients. I still struggle every day with the moral suffering I take on in this profession due to short staffing and challenges providing quality patient care, yet I could never go into another career that's as fulfilling and important as nursing. I still struggle every day with the moral suffering I take on in this profession due to short staffing and challenges providing quality patient care, yet I could never go into another career that is as fulfilling and important as nursing.

