



## Congratulations, Ian!

You are the recipient of the New Mexico Nursing Excellence "Touch a Life" award!

This nurse will forever be in the hearts of my family. I feel blessed that for the final day that we would spend with my father on this earth, that he would have his care in the hands of this phenomenal nurse. His compassion is genuine, not only embodied in every ounce of what he gave my dad that day, but an apparent example of what he naturally gives to all his patients and families.

It was a very moviesque morning with a phone call I had missed from my mom, with an immediate call back, "hey, can you come to the hospital?" A father with cancer and this son understanding that this call might someday come was not a fair preparation that would provide any sort of ease with this abrupt overwhelming fear. I got to the hospital and my mom was at dad's bedside and that was the first time I saw this nurse.

This nurse had a student nurse in the intensive care with him that day. Every time that my dad felt uncomfortable, he was there, and the student was with him. He was never short, he never acted as any time was the "one-time-too-many." He never had to out-explain why my dad shouldn't need anything that he requested. He knelt to the level that my mother was sitting at. Speaking gently with his pace, tone, volume, and mannerisms. She was in a separate world trying to respect what my dad had wanted, no one knowing that the cancer had come back. The location left him without his voice, but he was able to mouth words. It was at the point to let our large family know that dad was going to die. Which for a world separated with by covid precautions, they had not been able to see my dad or know the severity of his illness. Regardless of reminding family that not everyone could visit, people started showing up.

Being a critical care nurse during the pandemic I will never forget those moments of being there with dying patients. We shared end moments and were the newfound family members that would stay at the bedside to make sure that no one died alone. This nurse gave me a piece of my life back.



## HEALTH

I know God exists because of the moments that were gifted back that day. I got to tell my dad thank you, I got to hold my dad and tell him I loved him. And I got to do it as a son, as a son losing his dad that day. I was never expected to just know things from the nursing perspective. He listened. He was always a wonderful support to my mom. He educated her through her decision making and respected her grief.

This nurse had a student with him that day. I am thankful that this level of care will be perpetuated from his teaching. He had his student with him during every step and every approach. What an example. My approach with families and colleagues has also been strengthened because of him.

When it was time to turn off the infusions, he looked right at me. We just nodded at each other. I will never forget that. My dad had a beautiful and peaceful death. We were all at his side and present with each other. Not everyone gets that, that actual goodbye. He created an environment that encompassed all the beauties of support that we still talk about and are still thankful for.