



# Graduate Success Story

**Java J. Johnson**

**2014, Diploma in Practical Nursing**

Java J. Johnson entered young adulthood while experiencing an untraditional order of life-changing events. Throughout it all, she held tight to her dreams of success. She was just 16 when her first child was born. High school became a thing of the past, and Java studied to take the General Educational Development (GED) test while she cared for her infant.

She spent a year serving in the National Guard, and later found her true calling was in caring for others. Java continued studying, and became a certified nursing assistant (CNA). She now had several children, and wanted to continue providing for her family.

Her goal was to become a nurse. She navigated the obstacle of completing several prerequisite classes before she could enter a nursing program. She and her children lived in subsidized housing for several years while she completed this step. As she explored nursing programs at different schools, Java decided on Brown Mackie College—Indianapolis.

The rigorous academics became overwhelming at times. Determined to complete the program successfully, Java made some extremely hard decisions. “I chose to send my children to live with my mother for a while, and I gave up my apartment to save money while I went through the program,” she says.

Persevering through homelessness, financial struggles, and family upheaval, Java graduated in 2014, earning a Practical Nursing diploma. She went on to pass the licensure exam, and now works

as a licensed practical nurse (LPN) at Life’s Touch in Indianapolis, Indiana. This home health care agency provides trained medical staff to care for patients at home.

Java enjoys caring for those in need. “I administer medications, and assess patient conditions, taking the whole person into account. Also, I document vital information for effective communication with other health care providers,” she says. She provides comfort measures daily and participates in healing and disease management. Meeting new people is an aspect of her career that Java enjoys.

She encourages others to follow their higher education goals. “Advice I would give to new students is, first and foremost, to attend class and pay attention,” says Java. “Second, build a positive rapport with the instructors and staff. I enjoyed the one-on-one interaction and the bonds we made. Everyone was understanding and flexible when ‘life’ happened. Last, study, study, study outside of school.”

Java’s rewards of a college education include a new professional career and meaningful time with her children. “I am proud of never giving up on becoming a successful single mother and nurse. I am becoming the woman I want to be and the best nurse I can be,” she says. Java plans to continue her nursing education through the master’s degree level. Her new goal is to open a medical office as a nurse practitioner, or join an existing practice in that capacity.

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