

Andrew Shaw



Albreny Chavez and Savannah Watson

Re-igniting Faith, Forming Connections and Finding Purpose

within the AdventHealth University nursing program

“If I had followed my timeline and not God’s... I wouldn’t be here,” said **Savannah Watson**, AdventHealth University Denver nursing student. “As cliché as it may sound, you need to let go and let God.”

Since 2009, Centura has partnered with AHU Denver, located on the Centura-Porter Adventist Hospital campus, to provide the next generation of caregivers with the tools they need to compassionately care for the whole health of their future patients—mind, body and spirit. Centura Health holds faith as a sacred foundation and believes in spreading inspiration through behaviors and actions.

Savannah Watson and **Albreny Chavez** are nursing

students at AHU Denver. As they work through the nursing program and their clinical rotations in Centura hospitals, not only have they acquired the skills needed to become future nurses, but they have found reasons to re-ignite their faith and live out their true purpose.

As first-generation college students, the road to finding their way after obtaining their Associate of Science degrees was bumpy. With help and support from the AHU staff, coupled with a passion to give back to others and a calling to get closer to God, Watson and Chavez pursued the AHU Denver nursing program.

“Coming to AHU, one of the classes we had to take was the Philosophy of Health

Care with **Pastor Seth Day**. The class touched on the healing ministry of God and how to incorporate that into our everyday care. At that time in my life, I was very lost and wanted to find guidance. The school brought my faith back to light and gave me hope,” said Chavez.

To further cement their faith, Chavez was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church in July 2021, which followed Watson’s baptism in November 2020—marking the first two baptisms in the history of AHU Denver.

Throughout high school, Chavez learned how to help her mom work through many health issues, including struggling with diabetes. Later in life, her then-boyfriend had brain surgery, and Chavez was there to help with his post-operative care.

“That’s where I found my passion for wanting to become a nurse. I want to help other people and have a healing ministry within myself,” said Chavez.

For Watson, her call to nursing was solidified when her little brother, now 16 years old, was born with a double nuchal cord, which occurs when the umbilical cord wraps around the baby’s neck twice. After almost dying during birth, he recovered in the neonatal intensive care unit—a floor that Watson strives to work on someday.

“I have a passion for people, human science

and wanting to help other families like the nurses who helped save my little brother,” said Watson.

As Watson works toward her goal of becoming a NICU nurse, she also wants to obtain her graduate degree and would love to come back to AHU Denver as a nurse educator. Chavez has set her sights on becoming a nurse practitioner with the hopes of guiding other nurses along the way. The collective goal to mentor comes from the same mentorship and support they’ve received in their classes and during their clinical rotations in Centura’s hospitals.

“The staff was so welcoming and supportive, always willing to pull us in and hold our hands through every experience,” said Watson.

As they fondly recall their time spent with Centura caregivers, they attribute their positive experience to the attentive, hands-on training they received while on-site.

“At Centura-Avista Adventist Hospital, the clinical instructor would start every clinical rotation with a prayer and ended with one as well. It was so grounding and really helped you get into the right mindset to care for your patients,” said Chavez.

Thanks to their decision to “let go and let God,” Chavez and Watson’s unique paths have led them to one another and to AHU Denver where they are able to re-ignite their faith, form connections and find purpose.

Brianna DiPilato is a writer for Centura Health.