

# Balance

## Work-Life

**Jane (Presnick) Lyon '78 NURS-Honors** (pictured second on right) has ties to UConn that run deep. This honors scholar began her nursing career with her education at UConn, and she learned many lessons at Storrs, ones that have helped her maintain a sense of harmony in all aspects of her busy life.

Jane followed in her siblings' footsteps when she attended UConn, and it was here she met her husband, David '78 (CLAS), '81 (BUS), in McMahon Hall on October 14, 1977, during a Yankees and Red Sox playoff game. Despite a difference in team loyalties, they married five years later and began their family. They had four boys, who all eventually attended UConn as well: Michael '08 (CLAS); Robert '11 (CLAS), '14 (LAW); David '14 (CLAS-Honors); and William '16 (BUS).

Jane's family was the impetus for her career in nursing. Her mother was a nurse as were her aunts. But her mother foresaw changes coming to the profession and encouraged Jane to earn a formal college degree in the field. "[My mother] was a diploma graduate (St. Raphael's in New Haven) but knew that the future of nursing was the baccalaureate and encouraged me to get my BSN," said Lyon. "I am forever grateful to her for that advice."

When Jane came to UConn as an honors student, the Honors Program was still relatively new, though its ranks were growing. "I believe our graduating class in the School of Nursing had 106 students in 1978 with two of us graduating from the Honors Program," she said. Jane fondly remembers the structured education of the UConn Nursing program, the clinical on-site experiences her senior year, and the exceptional faculty. "In addition to the coursework," said Lyon, "the time management, responsibility, and professionalism learned at UConn have served me well."

Before she even graduated from UConn, Jane was already building her resume and gaining experience at an institution that would eventually become a large part of her career. "Between my junior and senior year, I worked as a student trained aide at Waterbury Hospital," she said. "That auspicious beginning led to a 35-year affiliation with Waterbury Hospital. I was hired as a graduate nurse in 1978 in the float pool. Being in the float pool was great because I learned about many different areas of nursing. Every night was different!" During the course of her nursing career, Lyon continued to challenge herself.



She has worked in surgical intensive care, post-critical care, and cardiac care, ranging from a charge nurse to a nursing supervisor, and even worked briefly as a nursing instructor.

The option of a per diem schedule was another reason why Jane chose nursing. This scheduling system afforded Lyon the flexibility "to accommodate my other passion—raising a family," she said. Jane has been able to effectively blend both career and home life for her four sons. She served as PTA president, member of the Soccer Club Board of Directors, registrar for the Soccer Club, coach for her sons' youth baseball teams, and Merit Badge Counselor for the Boy Scouts. "The Honors Program taught me to push myself and not say 'no' to a challenge," she said. "I took on all of these tasks wondering how I would get it all done, but the lessons learned at UConn about working hard have paid off."

In 2007, when her boys were mostly grown or already off to college, Jane focused her attention again on nursing, and she accepted a position as nursing supervisor at UConn's Health Center, where she remains today. Her job requires her to closely monitor staff levels and problems across 14 units, and address policy and procedural questions for medical staff.

This job brings her back to UConn, though she never really left. The Lyon boys attended and watched UConn games throughout their childhoods, ate at the Dairy Bar, and wore UConn gear from infancy. "Having my children attend UConn has been a wonderful experience," she said.

Jane and her siblings are also proud UConn donors, having established the Presnick Family Scholarship in honor of their parents, which is awarded to a junior nursing student. ■