



Ardelle Gabriel

Skownan First Nation

For many years after not fully completing high school, Ardelle worked a variety of jobs; but something seemed missing in her life. She wanted something more but couldn't quite put a finger on what that might be. Not one to sit around waiting for that something to fall on her lap she began to explore her options. She had been inside and through many hospitals but wondered what it might be like to work in one.

Finally, one day, she called up the local hospital in Dauphin, Manitoba and explained to the administrator there that she would like to shadow a nurse for a few days to see what it would be like to work in the hospital as a nurse. To her delight, the administrator agreed to let Ardelle walk beside one of the nurses for 3 days. It lit a fire inside her and right there and then she wanted to pursue becoming a nurse.

“My big plan was to become a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) but I needed my math to get into this level of training,” she recalled. “I needed a 95% passing grade for math and I studied hard for it and passed. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to enrol with Assiniboine Community College (ACC) because they took the first 25 enrollees and I was number 35. I stood out in the freezing cold that February morning to get enrolled but didn't get in.”

Fortunately, Ardelle seen another path that could move her towards her big plan – enrollment in the Health Care Aide training at ACC. She found incredible support through the employment and training staff at Skownan with Cheryl and Jason. “These two were an incredible team that really made this happen for me by providing the funding I needed to take this course,” she remembered. “They monitored my progress and did monthly reports for my 6-month Health Care Aide training. The folks at ACC were also great supporters; with them you are not simply a number – you are a person.”

Ardelle completed her 120 hours of practicum in March 2016 and secured a job shortly after graduating in June 2016. She took a Home Care position with the Prairie Mountain Regional Health Authority and things are really looking up for this hard working mother of two children. “During my practicum training it was hard to get child care for my children,” she said. “The difficult thing was to leave my children in care with people that I didn't know well. And getting only \$800 per month in funding, although I appreciated that funding, it was hard to make that money stretch out for the month.” But stretch those dollars she did and she graduated with great marks. Ardelle still has a plan to fulfill her dream to obtain her LPN designation and to work at the hospital. With the Health Care Aide training, she is closer to reaching that dream.
