



## Rooted in Jesuit Values, Nurse Tackles Systemic Health from the Margins

STORY: DEBBIE BLACK | PHOTO: YOSEF KALINKO

As a student in Seattle University's College of Nursing, Zandrea "Zandy" Harlin realized that working in a hospital wasn't for her. "It was really clear that I wanted to work in the community." Since graduating in 2006, she has stayed true to that vision even as her role has evolved from front-line care to a leadership position effecting systemic change.

The trajectory of Zandy's professional path was enviably streamlined, supported at key junctures by her Jesuit education. Beginning her freshman year, Roger Gillis, S.J., her undergraduate counselor, played a critical role in helping her discover that nursing was the right direction. The nursing program's focus on social justice and opportunities to work in community health settings awakened Zandy's sense of professional purpose.

After receiving her BSN, she spent a year in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps serving developmentally disabled adults. There she "realized that working with vulnerable people was an important piece of my life." Her first job was with the Downtown Emergency Service Center in Seattle where she

provided care to homeless adults, many of whom suffered from mental illness.

Several years later Zandy moved to Group Health Cooperative where she was exposed to a broader patient population. After earning her master's degree in public health, she transitioned to a management position. But something wasn't quite right. Her Seattle University education guided her, this time through an alumni program designed to help young professionals become contemplative leaders. The experience offered her "a structured way to reflect about who I wanted to be in the world and how my work was utilizing my gifts." She moved into a leadership position at Group Health where she addresses systemic issues to improve quality of care.

"I get to think about how to better serve vulnerable groups," she says. "It's great for me to be in a place where my skills, my gifts and my passions are aligning."

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