



## Career Advancement Comes True for Brookdale Nurse

Before coming to Brookdale, Jason Staggs had heard the company offered nurses the potential for advancing their careers. His experience has more than lived up to that expectation. Within a year of accepting a part-time position, he was promoted to his current full-time leadership post of health and wellness director at Brookdale Belle Meade. He oversees clinical operations, manages care associates and serves as a key leader at the community.

Staggs previously worked in skilled nursing. Learning that he was interested in making a change, a colleague suggested he explore opportunities at Brookdale's senior living communities. The recommendation surprised him because he didn't know they employed nurses. "I was shocked by that," he said. "I fell in love with the environment, with what Brookdale stood for and offered seniors."

He has thrived on developing relationships with the seniors in his care. "In the hospital and skilled nursing settings, you are focused on treating what their ailment is," said Staggs, 40, and a resident of Nashville. "Here, we are with our residents every day and we are looking at their wellbeing. I get to know so much about them." Especially satisfying are "being part of their lives every day, taking part in activities, having conversations with them, and the sheer satisfaction of knowing they are enjoying it here."

Staggs, who studied at the Tennessee Technological University and the University of Tennessee at Martin, relishes the level of responsibility he has quickly been given. After moving to full-time work, he helped launch his community's Clare Bridge Crossings program, which seeks to delay the progression of dementia for people in its early stages. Along the way, Brookdale has provided him the tools and education needed to flourish in his work, including in his current position.

"The training they have health and wellness directors go through prepares us for success in a leadership role," he said.

As much as he has achieved at Brookdale, Staggs seeks to advance further. His next goal is to move to a regional clinical position. "Brookdale really likes to promote from within," he said. "If you put forth the effort, the company will enable you to move up."

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