



When Wendy Lund joined the United States Air Force at the age of eighteen, she had never been on an airplane or met someone from another culture. Within a few short months, that all changed. Wendy was stationed in Germany for four and half years. “I took advantage of every opportunity and traveled all over Europe,” Wendy recalls. “I also took college courses while I was serving and earned two associate’s degrees.”

From the Air Force, Wendy went right into the Air National Guard, based out of Great Falls. She also applied to college to complete a Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing. “I already had all of my general education course work completed and most of it transferred so I was able to go straight into the nursing program and start classes.” With the GI Bill, getting her degree didn’t cost her anything.

Military Service Provides One Woman with Education, Career, and World Travel

She completed her nursing program and was hired at Livingston HealthCare in January 2005. She worked on the Medical Surgical floor at the hospital. “I knew I needed that experience on the floor, but Joan Huie, the operating room manager was looking for more staff and approached me about working for her,” Wendy says. “After about a year, I decided to join the OR team and I pursued my operating room nurse certification (CNOR). That process took two years and 2000 hours of experience in the OR.”

At the same time, Wendy became a commissioned officer in the Guard. She continued to serve one weekend a month and two weeks a year and signed up for other opportunities when she could. “There are opportunities to sign up for special duty in addition to your regular ‘weekend warrior’ commitment,” Wendy explains. “I can’t always take the time off, but if there is a cool opportunity and I can do it, I am on it.” She has been to Iraq, worked with the border patrol, and worked at military hospitals in Italy and Hawaii. “Livingston HealthCare is great about working with those of us who are in the National Guard so we can go when we need to,” Wendy adds.

Every mission provides a chance to learn new skills and keep up skills that you don’t use often. “The thing about medicine is that it is dynamic, so you are always learning new things,” Wendy says. “In the Guard and at Livingston HealthCare, you could be doing any one of five jobs in a day and you have to adapt all the time. Both roles teach you to be flexible.”

“I will definitely stay in the Guard until I reach my full twenty years and maybe beyond that,” says Wendy. “I would have been a recruiter if I weren’t a nurse!” She would encourage any young person to consider service of some kind. “Military service really is a chance to get an education, travel, and learn a career,” she adds. “It worked out for me, and it can do the same for anyone else. You just have to make the most of the opportunity.”

★
Expanded Hours

Your healthcare needs aren't always pressing, and for many, it can be difficult to get to the clinic on the weekdays even for routine care. So we offer extended hours on Saturdays from 8:30 am - 12:00 pm. To make an appointment, call 222-0800.