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Home Address: Augusta Walk

Hometown: Lake Charles, La.

My family: My world are my three children: Victoria Kamphuis who is a physical therapist at University Health, Katherine Kamphuis who works at Gemalto in Austin, and John Kamphuis, III who swam for IUPUI and will be graduating this summer in Political Science and moving to Washington, DC. My mother Betty LaCaze also lives in Shreveport and is very much a part of my life. The only child I have left at home is my companion and buddy for 14 years, Dozer my Golden Retriever.

Community by definition is a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common. It is also the feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of common interests and goals as described by the Oxford dictionary. I found myself a transplant to this community in 1980. Born in Lake Charles, I was the only child of a single mother who was a nurse anesthetist. I grew up in the medical community so it was no surprise when I chose nursing as a major in college. I started at McNeese in Lake Charles but transferred a few years later to one of the top nursing schools in the nation then and now, Northwestern State University. I found my calling my senior year upon doing a clinical rotation in the Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) at LSU Medical Center. I graduated in December 1981 and began work in the MICU at LSU in 1982. I moved up the ranks quickly from staff nurse, to day charge nurse and eventually was offered the Critical Care Education Coordinator position over all the ICU's at the Medical Center where I trained all incoming ICU registered nurses. I married in 1988 and within 2 years had my first child. I was older so we didn't waste time and by 1993 I had three beautiful children. I worked part time during this time until I felt the need to do more. I wanted to get back to patient care and I enrolled in the Acute Care Nurse Practitioner program at NSU. I call this my mid life crisis. What mother of 3 young children working full time goes back to school. Well that would be me!

In 2000 I graduated with my Masters of Science in Nursing and became Certified as an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner. I began work with a large cardiology group in the city until I was offered a position at Highland Clinic in Internal Medicine where I am today. It has been one of the best decisions of my life.

I still get tickled every time I get asked so just what do you do? Just exactly what does a Nurse Practitioner do? Well that answer varies depending on your specialty. There are many avenues I could have gone down when going back to school. I chose Acute Care because of my 17 years in the ICUs. I am governed by the Louisiana State Board of Nursing and board certified in Acute Care. I work under my own license which

has to be renewed yearly. My board certification is renewed every 5 years. I have full prescriptive authority in Louisiana which allows me to prescribe medications needed to treat my patients. In the state of Louisiana we are required by law to have a collaborative practice agreement with a physician but we can practice independent of that physician. This varies from state to state. According to my scope of practice I can diagnose and treat adult patients both in a clinic and an acute care hospital setting.

Since my start at Highland Clinic my role has evolved. When I first started there I picked up another providers patient load when they left the clinic and saw many patients that my collaborating physician did not have time to see. As the years went by my practice blossomed and today I have my own practice in Internal Medicine. Since I am adult trained and certified I am not licensed to see children. The ages of my patients range from 17 to 100. I am now the primary care provider for close to 1000 patients in our community and surrounding area. Highland Clinic is unique in that we have so many specialties under one roof. It allows me easy access to other providers should my patients need referrals. I accept all insurance plans and Medicare and accept new patients daily.

I have loved nursing but I have truly loved my time as a Nurse Practitioner. My patients are an extension of my family. I love the interaction I get to have with each and every one of them. It is a relationship and a bond that grows with time, a trust that I value and cherish. Highland Clinic has allowed me to grow my practice and given me enormous support along the way. I find myself blessed to have a job I love with such a wonderful medical community. It is the care of this community that is my passion. At the end of the day on my way home to Southern Trace I know I've given them my best.