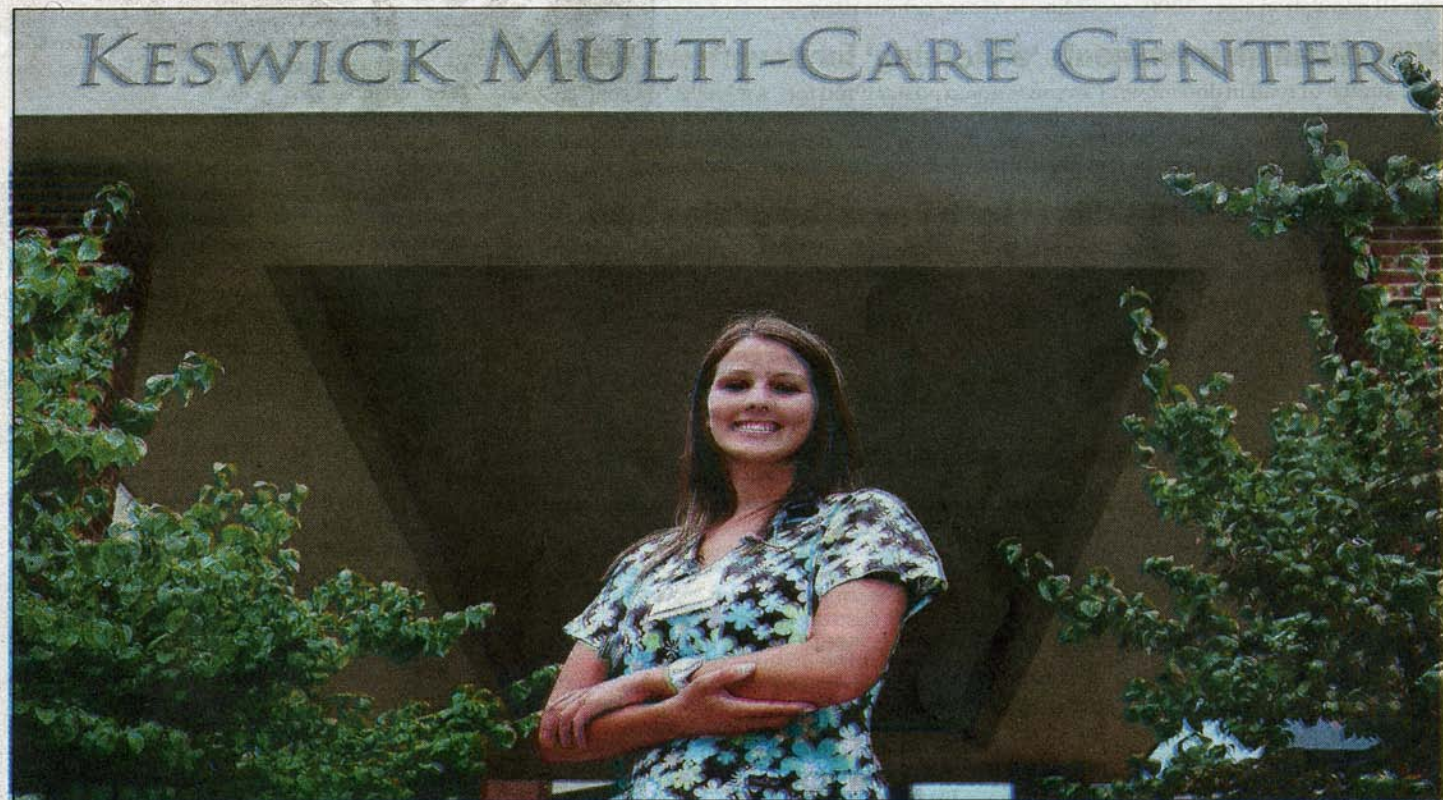


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Baltimore MESSENGER

Serving the city's northern neighborhoods

Week of August 11, 2011 | Volume 42, Number 44



STAFF PHOTO BY JEN RYNDA

Nursing's future | Page 8

Nurse Amanda Sanders, winner of Keswick Multi-Care Center's first nursing scholarship in 2004, stands outside the facility in Hampden on Aug. 3. Keswick officials say they need more nurses like her in the short-staffed profession.

Keswick care facility touts scholarship winner

Nurse Amanda Sanders seen as future of profession facing national shortage

By Larry Perl
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Kenwood High School in Essex had no shortage of college scholarships for Amanda Sanders to apply for in 2004.

"They had this bin full of scholarships," recalled Sanders, now 24.

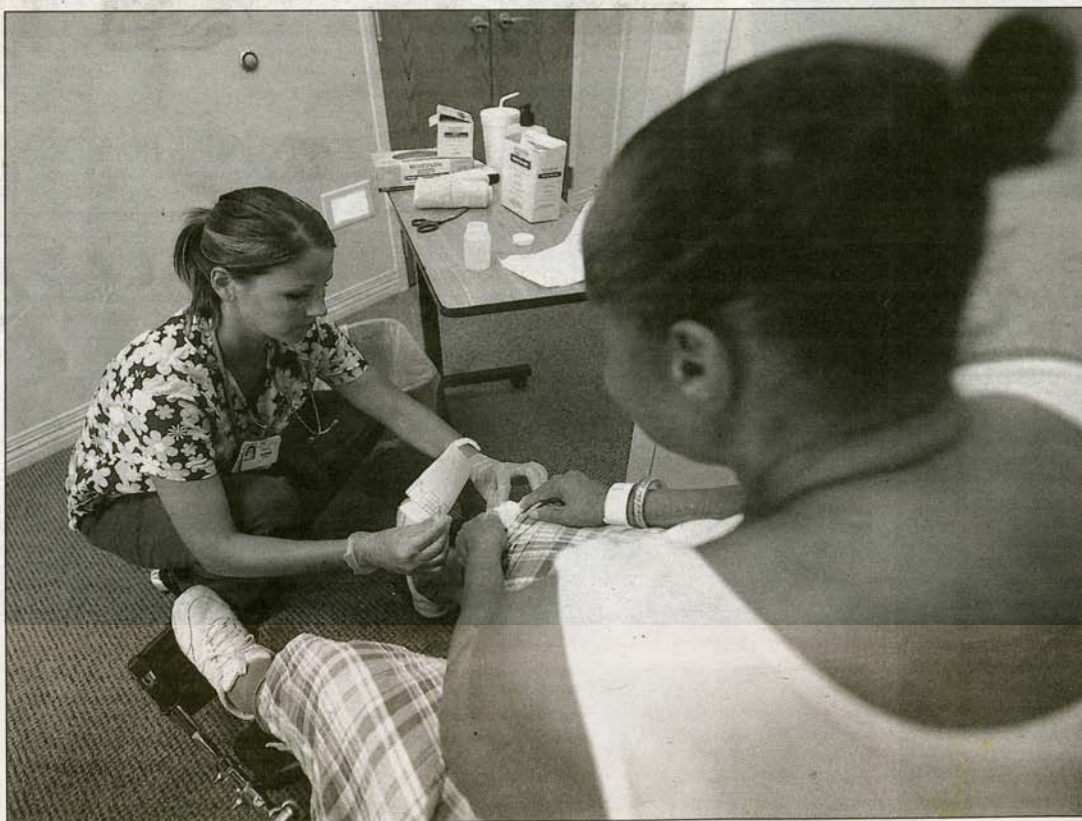
One in particular caught her eye — the first ever offered by Keswick Multi-Care Center, a long-term care facility in Hampden.

The Henry Baker Registered Nursing Scholarship paid for four years of nursing school tuition and books for Sanders at Essex Community College, on the condition that she worked at Keswick for two years after earning her degree.

Sanders actually got started early. She came as a nursing assistant while still in college and began her career as a registered nurse in 2006, still for Keswick. She's worked there five years in all, and won a top Keswick employee award last year.

'I anticipate (patients') needs before they ring their bell sometimes.'

Amanda Sanders,
nurse at Keswick Multi-Care Center



STAFF PHOTO BY JEN RYNDA

Amanda Sanders, a nurse at Keswick Multi-Care Center, dresses patient Maureen Green's knee at the long-term care facility.

She has no immediate plans to leave, saying, "I'm comfortable. I like the people I work with."

Keswick, a long-term, transitional and memory care facility, is touting Sanders as representing the sort of "eager, committed candidate" they're looking for at a time when a shortage of nurses nationally is expected to rise to nearly 600,000 jobs in the next 10 years.

As an aide and then a nurse, Sanders has worked on all floors at Keswick, 700 W. 40th St., but is now assigned to the Baker Rehabilitation Unit for transitional patients, many just out of hospitals.

"I see a lot of joint replacements," she said.

She also fills in as needed in the long-term care unit.

On a typical day, Sanders, of White Marsh, comes to work at 7:30 a.m., one of three nurses on the transitional care unit, and has 12 patients at any one time. Her job includes making their time on the unit as homey as possible, down to serving meals on place mats, not trays.

"I anticipate their needs before they even ring their bells sometimes," she said.

Although Sanders is Keswick's ambassador for a career in nursing, she points out that it can cost employers a lot of money to train a nurse fresh from college, "and a lot of people out of school are running into that."

She recommends starting out in a lesser role and working your way up, as she did.

"And (employers) get to know you," she said.

Sanders said at some point, she might find a new nursing job, to gain more knowledge in her field. But she expects she will come back to Keswick — if she can get motivated enough to leave.

"That's my problem," she said. "I'm too comfortable."