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Mrs. Power

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### *Patricia McKay Bufalino*

Patti Bufalino was born in New York; she was raised in a family with her father being a WWII Veteran. Everyone knew she worked for the government in some sort of way. She says that in those times there was a very stereotypical job for women. They were either going to become nurses or some type of teaching; something they could do and maintain themselves financially before they became a housewife. Later she attended Saint Joseph College in Maryland, before signing up for the navy in 1966.

Patti's training was done at St. Joseph. She graduated in 1968, the navy paid for her last two years of college. She then went to Newport for 4 weeks to complete Officer Indoctrination. The only place she was stationed was at Philadelphia Naval Hospital. She was there from 1968-1970. In the hospital she was in charge of quite a lot. She was charge nurse in gastrointestinal medicine, neurology, infectious diseases, dermatology, cardiopulmonary medicine, medical intensive care unit, and EENT. Since she was charge nurse she was in charge of lots of wards. In the evening shift she was in charge of 2 or 3 wards, at night, she was in charge of 6 wards. She

never saw combat, although she said that being in that hospital gave her a lot of experience that she wouldn't of gotten anywhere else. At the hospital, she also trained Corpsmen.

During the Vietnam War the Philadelphia Hospital was the center for many soldiers to go and get care. Many men couldn't leave there, because they weren't discharged from duty to go back to service or they were medically discharged. She served two years, unlike others who only did one year and resigned. In those times she was young and worked the afternoon shifts from 3pm-11pm. To her it was the best shift you could have. Since many working there were young, they used to have lots of parties over the weekend. There would be parties that would last all day. People would get off their shift and join the party, while others would be leaving to start their shift.

Patti enjoyed her experience in the navy during her service. She said as a new nurse it was good to have many shifts and work as much as she did. It taught her significantly and it prepared her to continue teaching. She also enjoyed how everyone in the hospital was young, full of life, and willing to help as much as they could for the war. In the hospital there was never any discrimination. She said there was a sense of unity that brought them together to help soldiers and their country as much as they could. She said many people then didn't think much about what was happening in the war; they just concentrated on helping people in the hospital.

She said the navy gave her more responsibilities than any civilian hospital would have given her and helped prepare her for her life as a nurse. She later married a Corpsman in 1969. A year after she got married, she was honorably discharged for becoming pregnant. She then use the GI bill to get her master's in education and in nursing. She was very passionate in

teaching what she learned about nursing. She then became a nursing professor at Riverside City College and later as a Department Chair and Dean at Moreno Valley College. She retired in 2010 after 31 years in education.

Patti is very proud of her service. She believes she did more than enough for the war effort and tried her best to do so. Even though she was not in combat, Patti still looked after soldier's health and trained many Corpsmen. She then went on to show her teachings to other nurses. She is now docent at the Moreno Valley Inn and also meets with other retired nurses. She is proud of what she has done throughout her life and we should all be very grateful for her service.