

# JENNA WAHL

## Biking in the Canadian Rockies: The Adventures of Registered Nurse Jenna Wahl

Graduate: Class of 2002    Occupation: Registered Nurse    By Sarah Welp, Spring 2010

After switching her major and changing colleges, Jenna Wahl, a 2002 graduate of Forest Park, finally found the job for her-registered nursing. As a child, Jenna wanted to become a teacher; entering junior high she changed her mind and wanted to become a physician. While going to DePauw University for two years and studying biochemistry and pre-medicine, Jenna decided she did want that job. The next fall, she enrolled at Indiana University to become a registered nurse.

As a student at Forest Park, Jenna participated in numerous activities: tennis, band, spell bowl, and the math academic team. Participating in these activities helped her become more responsible and learn time management skills. A highlight from her high school experience involves winning a state title in marching band. Her high school chemistry teacher, Mrs. Wallace, influenced her most. She influenced Jenna because she had a great love for chemistry and teaching. "I found it incredible how happy she was to do her job and to help others find what they love," she says. "She provided me with a lot of resources to explore the sciences."

Enrolling at DePauw University, Jenna initially chose biochemistry because she enjoyed studying chemistry, but she realized a career in that field did not suit her. Therefore, she extended her college career and transferred to Indiana University. Realizing that she wanted a change, Jenna took a career assessment and completed an internship. This process introduced her to the field of nursing. "I chose nursing because I loved the field of medicine, and I wanted a career in which I could have a great deal of direct patient contact," says Jenna. To her, nursing provides that opportunity.

While enrolled at IU, Jenna developed a passion for cycling. After discovering this hobby, she joined the Athena Cycling team and rode in the Little 500 in Bloomington. She also participated in a 1,500 mile, eighteen-day bike trip to the Canadian Rockies. As a college student, she also took part in other activities such as working as a resident assistant in the dorms at IU. Proudly, Jenna graduated with highest distinction from Indiana University.

As a nurse, Jenna provides medical assistance to help her patients and their loved ones through the difficult time of their illness. Nursing gives her the opportunity to make a large impact in someone's life during a tough period. In March of 2009, she had the privilege of traveling to Ecuador with a group from Indiana University. They provided health care to underprivileged people. Traveling to Ecuador helped her realize that she had a gift she could use to help others. This chance to travel also helped her realize how great of a life she has.

Currently living in Bloomington, Indiana, Jenna works at Bloomington Hospital as a registered nurse. "Choose a career that will make you happy. In the end, you are the one who has to go to that job every day," she says. "Make wise decisions because the decisions you make now will affect your future." By following her own advice, Jenna has fulfilled a dream.