

2019 CARTHA Fellow

Susan H. Graves

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My interest in the sciences began at City High School in Iowa City and continued at the University of Northern Iowa where I received a BA in Biology with a minor in Chemistry in 2014. At UNI I served as president of the Student Nature Society for two years and led tours at the Botanical Center. During this time my career goal switched from veterinary science to healthcare. After graduation, I worked at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics as a nursing assistant in the Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC) and the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) where I gained direct patient care experience. In 2017 I began pursuing a degree in the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies program at Des Moines University.

Community service has always been an important part of my life. Most recently I have volunteered at the Senior Health Care Fair and the Girls Exploring Medicine and Science Event, both sponsored by Des Moines University. I have also volunteered at the Des Moines Children's Cancer Connection, the Des Moines Ronald McDonald House, the Iowa City Free Medical Clinic and the Iowa City Animal Shelter.

As a 2019 CARTHA Fellow, I am engaged in cross-sector collaboration to advance my aspirations for humanity related to healthcare. In particular, I want both healthcare professionals and the general public to understand the meaning of true palliative care and what it offers patients and caregivers. I am developing a podcast series centered on palliative care in which personal stories are shared and issues in the field are addressed in an attempt to humanize the work of a wide range of academics, professionals, and caregivers involved in this area.