

# A Miraculous Recovery

Nurse Begins Work at the Hospital that Saved Her Life

On Sept. 17, 2017, Jeanine Rapp was brought into the ER at AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center La Grange after experiencing difficulty breathing. She was in her last semester of nursing school and had been sick for a few weeks with an upper respiratory infection. Within four minutes of arriving to the ER, she was in full cardiac arrest due to a saddle pulmonary embolism. A blood clot in her right leg had moved to her lungs; her chances of survival were slim.

Placed under the care of emergency medicine specialist Amit Bakshi, M.D., and cardiologist Barry Sidorow, M.D., Rapp underwent an echocardiogram, was immediately started on medication to break up the blood clot and received CPR. After 90 minutes of resuscitation, her blood pressure still was only 30. Her family was told that the outlook was grim. Though unresponsive, her boyfriend asked her to hold on for just a while longer so that her daughters could have the chance to say goodbye. In the time between her partner retrieving her daughters from the waiting room and returning with them to her room, Rapp's blood pressure had risen to 150. Her care team was speechless, unable to explain what had just happened. It was nothing short of a miracle.

Her recovery would not be easy. During her time in the hospital, Rapp had to have 11 blood transfusions and nine dialysis treatments, with the first treatment being more than 12 hours long. Her kidneys had shut down during the period of resuscitation and there was initial concern that she might not make it through the first dialysis treatment.

Despite a difficult recovery, by mid-October she was back home, and with the support of her family, she was back to nursing school in January. "The team at AMITA Health La Grange saved my life. The doctors, the nurses in the ICU — everybody was amazing. I can't begin to thank half the people who cared for me. One day I was the sickest person there and the next day I was the 'miracle woman.' Most people don't survive what I went through," Rapp said.

Exactly one year later — on Sept. 17, 2018 — she arrived at AMITA Health La Grange for her first shift as a registered nurse in the progressive care unit. "I have such compassion for my patients. When taking care of critical patients, I now can say, 'I know what you're going through, because I've been there.' I can't describe how blessed I feel to be working in the hospital where I was treated, to give back and care for my patients in the same way I was cared for. I arrive for every shift happy to be here. Walking into the hospital is like walking into my home. I'm exactly where I need to be."



**Jeanine Rapp, R.N., progressive care unit, and her Facebook post detailing the miraculous event.**