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February 9, 2016

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Portrayal of Nursing Puts Us All at Risk*

Anthony Ruelas

Killeen, TX 76549

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Dear Anthony,

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I heard about your heroic act through Rissa Shaw's reporting. I am so proud of you for saving Tishica's life! I am 100% positive if you had not acted as you had that Tishica would have died. Actually, even with your actions, I'm surprised she survived. I've seen a lot of people deteriorate and die in my time practicing nursing in busy hospital emergency departments. Usually by the time someone's breathing gets so bad that they collapse to the floor, they are often too far-gone to save. Thank goodness there was a registered nurse at your school--somewhat miraculous since so many schools have no nurse at all. You and the nurse were both necessary parts of Tishica's survival plan.

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My work at The Truth About Nursing aims to strengthen the nursing profession. I encourage nurses to fight for what's right for patients worldwide by believing in what they know and taking quick action to save lives. There are so many people in this world who are too afraid of violating arbitrary rules to act and do the right thing. And when the consequences of listening to some wrong-headed person are so high, it is even more important to speak and act--just as you did when you saved Tishica.

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I would love to have someone with your strength and courage join the nursing profession and help other nurses find strength in themselves to stand up for what's right and save patients. Right now, health care errors are the third leading cause of death in the US. Research shows nurses are the health professionals most likely to catch and prevent an error. But we aren't preventing enough--nurses need the strength and courage you have.

I hope you study hard in math and science so you can be in a position to explore nursing school. Not all young men know that nursing is a career for them. We have an article specifically for men here [www.truthaboutnursing.org/faq/men\\_in\\_nursing.html](http://www.truthaboutnursing.org/faq/men_in_nursing.html) and many more if you search our site for "male" and "men." And we have information about becoming a nurse here [www.truthaboutnursing.org/faq/be\\_a\\_nurse.html](http://www.truthaboutnursing.org/faq/be_a_nurse.html). If you do apply to nursing school, please submit this letter along with your other recommendations.

You are a hero, Anthony. Congratulations on your great work and please keep on speaking the truth to power, as they say, because that is what we need to make the world a better and safer place where more people like Tishica get to live their full lives.

All my best,

Sandy Summers, RN, MSN, MPH  
Founder and Executive Director, The Truth About Nursing  
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#### THE TRUTH ABOUT NURSING

is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that seeks to increase public understanding of the central, front-line role nurses play in modern health care. Our focus is to promote more accurate, balanced and frequent media portrayals of nurses and increase the media's use of nurses as expert sources. The Truth About Nursing's ultimate goal is to foster growth in the size and diversity of the nursing profession at a time of critical shortage, strengthen nursing practice, teaching and research, and improve the health care system.