

Faces of FRONTIER: *FOCUSED ON THE MISSION*



Dorothy "Dottie" Stoner, MSN, FNP-C
FNU Bridge Class 53 Graduate

After attending orientation at Frontier Bound, Dorothy Stoner was hooked. She knew Frontier Nursing University's virtues – "reaching out to those in need, caring for the community, daring to dream" – made it "exactly the place for me."

Since graduating from Frontier in 2010 as a family nurse practitioner, Dorothy – a Bridge Class 53 graduate who goes by "Dottie" – has certainly dared to dream. Dottie recently opened her own clinic in the Western Colorado community of Fruita to provide care to those with the greatest need, including Medicare and Medicaid patients and the uninsured. She operates Hometown Healthcare out of a rented one-bedroom home that belonged to her late mother-in-law. "I am the only employee and have one exam room."

Dottie also works full-time as Director of Nursing for long-term care at Family Health West, a nonprofit that has been providing rural health care services in Western Colorado for more than 60 years.

With the start of the recession a few years ago and an oil boom in Colorado that went bust, the economic picture in her community turned bleak. "Most of the oil field jobs moved out of the area. There are many people who have lost their insurance, many on Medicaid and Medicare." She said most providers in the area aren't accepting new cash-only or Medicaid clients. "The cash pay rates that are available are high, and patients have voiced they cannot afford them or that some providers do not allow payment plans."

Dottie's mission is to provide access to care for all the people in her community, regardless of their means. Dottie offers a low cash rate, depending on the level of service, beginning at \$28.88. "If unable to pay in full, the patient may make payments." Dottie also offers other arrangements as well, allowing her clients to trade a product or service – such as housekeeping or yard work to upkeep the clinic – in return for her services.

Dottie, who has about 15 patients so far and was recently featured in an article in her local newspaper, says the response from her clients has been positive. "They are so happy to be seen for something simple such as strep or UTI and not have to go to an emergency room."

Dottie is grateful to Frontier for her education and for providing her with the "ability to dream."

"The amount of support was immeasurable," she says. "Professors, students, graduates were all there to reach out and help each other. Frontier helped my career, by informing us to find our state laws, encouragement to speak up and verbalize the needs of our profession. I even received a personal phone call from my state representative during the 2010 vote on allowing nurse practitioners to be independent providers, which is now the case."

I have always wanted to provide more for the community. I know the whole community needs care, not just those with insurance or money.

**- Dorothy "Dottie" Stoner,
CFNP Class 53**

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