

Members of the Gillespie Family usually fall into one of two categories: sales or medicine.

Gillespie's that are charming, witty and filled with the gift of gab are natural born salesmen while Gillespie's that are caring, gentle and perfectionists are destined for the health care industry.

So true is the account of the horse and buggy physician, Dr. Fred Gillespie and his grandson, Fred, who built a successful career in sales while raising three young daughters who would grow up to excel in the field of medicine.

The oldest, Ann earned her nursing degree and a doctorate degree in philosophy and natural health sciences while middle daughter, Denise, navigated the administrative side of health care. The youngest, Kathleen, pursued nursing.

Kathleen began classes at the University of Texas Medical Branch's School of Nursing in the mid 80's. During this time, both older sisters were constant sources of moral support.

While at UTMB, Kathleen recalls a specific rotation in the Blocker Burn Unit that helped her come to understand the process of healing as well as the effort and care that was required of a nurse. This experience made a profound impact on her and helped shape her career.

She went on to earn her bachelor's degree in nursing in 1988 and credits her sisters for keeping her grounded and pushing her to excel.

After the death of sister Denise and nephew Wade (Bubba), Kathleen wanted to honor their memory and their passion for giving to others with a gift to the institution that spawned her career and stoked her compassion for others.

This generous gift to the UTMB Blocker Burn Unit upholds the Gillespie family mantra, "*what the heart has once owned and had, it shall never lose,*" while memorializing loved ones who have passed and providing compassion and inspiration to others.



Kathleen Gillespie Watson (left) with sister Denise