Special Sections
Jewish Professionals
Lawyers, Doctors ...
Astronauts?

Seniors
Great Options for the
Golden Years

Oregon Innovators
National Fellowship Recipients
Sarah Blattner & Steve Eisenbach-Budner

Jewish Book Month
A Real Page Turner
When Irina Panova-Proctor came to the United States in 2009 to be with the love of her life, she left 18 years of nursing experience behind in her native Latvia and started from scratch. Though she had worked in pediatrics, neurology and maternity, her license wasn’t transferable.

“All around the world, nurses work not because of money but to help people,” Panova-Proctor said. “I love working with people and help those that are suffering. It’s my personality.”

Stateside, she decided to concentrate in elder care. Her first stops: Cedar Sinai Park, where she works parttime as a certified nursing assistant, and Workforce Improvement with Immigrant Nurses at Clackamas Community College, one of only five such programs in the country. According to their website, WIIN is “a re-entry program to provide a pathway to licensure and practice for nurses who have earned their credentials in foreign countries to return to work as nurses in the United States.”

Panova-Proctor will complete the five-term course in December, prepared to take the National Certifying and Licensing Examination (NCLEX-RN) and become a registered nurse once again. Reflecting on the experience, she said, “I am fortunate that Cedar Sinai Parks [Lucio and Irene Villa Memorial] Scholarship program has covered part of the tuition.”

Panova-Proctor is also stepping onto the international stage. From Oct. 26 to 27, she will be representing her WIIN program at the 10th annual conference of the International Bilingual Nursing Alliance in Chicago.

According to the IBNA website, the international conference aims to “share information about and discuss the impact of integration programs and methods to assist internationally educated nurses achieve licensure to practice nursing in the U.S.”

“It will be helpful to learn about other bilingual nurses’ experiences,” Panova-Proctor said. “Afterward I will be able to improve my work for the benefit of our residents. I know the job from the ground-level up, this will only elevate me further. I will also be able to provide support to other bilingual CNAs.”

CSP Chief Program Officer Kimberly Fuson said, “Irina exemplifies the blend of personal and professional that is the heart and soul of Robison Jewish Health Center. We are privileged she is part of our family and that we could assist her in making her dreams come true.”

Director of Nursing Jane Duck seconded Fuson’s sentiment. “We’re all proud of Irina, she’ll represent us well,” Duck said of the one-time Employee of the Quarter. “We work with a very diverse, multicultural group of staff, so Irina’s experience will help in integrating nurses from different cultures in our workforce.”

Panova-Proctor plans to continue her education with a bachelor’s degree in nursing. “As a nurse you study all your life,” she said.