Claire Mitchell graduated with her BSN in 1983 and took a position as a Staff Nurse at the Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas. She later worked as a scrub nurse and clinical ophthalmic assistant for two different eye surgeons.

In 1988, she decided to take a break from her nursing career to be a full-time mom to four wonderful children. “I had always planned to get back into nursing when my last child started school, but then I became the primary caregiver for my mom who had Alzheimer’s. After my mom passed away, I’d been out of nursing for 20 years. I was anxious to return to nursing, but scared to death” Mitchell said. “I was not prepared for how technology had changed and was completely out of practice on basic skills.”

She was impressed with the RN Refresher course offered at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio Nursing School and felt this was the best way to return to nursing.

Mitchell has good memories of the time spent in the course and her clinical assignments at University Hospital. “At the hospital, I met the most wonderful team of RN’s and Techs. Several of them took me under their wings, nurtured me, and helped me learn,” she said.

In May 2011, Mitchell completed the RN Refresher course and was hired at University Hospital as a Staff Nurse in Special Surgery. She gives back to her alma mater by speaking to students in the RN Refresher course on their skills days. She speaks about her experience in the course, transitioning to work and answers student questions. Outside of work, Mitchell keeps herself busy as a CPR instructor; substitutes as a school nurse in the Boerne ISD and enjoys spending time gardening, fly fishing, golfing and woodworking.

As for the most important lesson she learned as a UTHSCSA nursing student, Mitchell noted: “Nothing had prepared me for the changes I found in medicine and technology and this was the perfect place to renew my skills. When I found the RN Refresher course, I was so relieved because I found a way back into nursing and a support group to do it with me.”
If you are interested in learning more about our RN Refresher Course, and for application deadlines, please visit [http://nursing.uthscsa.edu/ce/rnRefresherCourse.aspx](http://nursing.uthscsa.edu/ce/rnRefresherCourse.aspx).

The RN Refresher is a 16-week course consisting of an online, didactic component and a clinical component. The course is designed to expand the nurses’ knowledge, skills and attitudes by applying information related to new technology, equipment, current nursing trends and legal and ethical issues to previously acquired formal education. The didactic component consists of 112 hours of online course instruction as well as 16 hours of skills lab conducted on campus over three days. This 16 week course is led by a registered nurse instructor. The student will be paired with a registered nurse preceptor to complete the 80 hours of clinical practicum in an affiliated clinical agency.