

# Alumni Spotlight

CUYAHOGA VALLEY CAREER CENTER

## Lauren Croyle, MHS, CCP

### Class of 2012



Lauren Croyle, a 2012 graduate of Brecksville-Broadview Heights High School and CVCC's Health Careers program, taught by Patty Valukievic, exemplifies how passion, perseverance, and networking can shape a successful career. From a young age, Lauren knew she wanted to work in the medical field but was unsure of the exact path to take. After attending a CVCC open house and living nearby, she was drawn to the Health Careers program. "I wanted a more focused education rather than general high school classes, and CVCC helped confirm my decision to pursue a career in healthcare," she shared.

Inspired by her love for science—and, she admits, a little bit by *Grey's Anatomy*—Lauren explored nursing but quickly realized it wasn't the right fit. Instead, she pivoted toward diagnostic medicine, a decision that shaped her future career. "I worked as a technician in the ICU for two years on night shifts, and it was eye-opening. Being surrounded by nurses, including my best friend's mom, helped me realize that wasn't my calling."

Lauren's career has been nothing short of impressive. In July 2024, she joined Keck Medicine of the University of Southern California as a Staff Perfusionist, where she performs all aspects of extracorporeal cardiopulmonary support for adult patients. Her responsibilities include myocardial and organ protection, administration of medications and blood products, anticoagulation monitoring, and operating mechanical assist devices such as ECMO circuits, VADs, and IABPs.

Before joining USC, Lauren gained extensive experience in the medical field, including roles as:

- Organ Recovery Specialist at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center
- Tissue Recovery Team Lead/Coordinator/Technician at Lifeline of Ohio
- MCSICU/CVICU Patient Care Technician at Mount Carmel West/Grove City
- Certified Pharmacy Technician at CVS Pharmacy during her undergraduate studies

Lauren earned her Bachelor of Science in Biology from Kent State University in 2016 and obtained her Master of Health Science in Cardiovascular Perfusion at Quinnipiac University in 2024. She also completed clinical practicums at Yale New Haven Hospital, Hartford Hospital, and Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center.

Reflecting on her time at CVCC, Lauren highlights some of her favorite class experiences, including earning her EKG Technician Certification and serving as Class President. "Attending CVCC was life-changing and exactly what I needed at the time. I loved going to class. The friends I made there were incredible, and I have so many great memories."

Lauren also highlights the importance of networking and taking initiative. "CVCC provides so many valuable opportunities—make the most of them! Connect with alumni from your program and build relationships. LinkedIn is an excellent resource, and don't hesitate to cold call or email professionals. During COVID, when shadowing was challenging, I reached out to cardiovascular perfusionists, and it made all the difference. As a first-generation college student with no family ties in the medical field, I had to create my own opportunities and used the internet to my advantage. I'll never forget a perfusionist FaceTiming me to show me a bypass machine and walk me through his day-to-day. If you're passionate about something, putting yourself out there is the key to success."

When asked how she found her way to USC, Lauren shared, "My husband and I always talked about living on the West Coast, and when I came across the job posting, I was ready for a change. Everything fell into place, and I'm loving it!" She also reflected on a full-circle moment: "Ms. Valukievic wrote my letter of recommendation for college, and now I'm the one writing them for others—it's surreal!" Lauren credits her foundation at CVCC for giving her a head start in healthcare. "I've had health career knowledge ingrained in me since I was 17. My CVCC background was a huge advantage in college, especially my EKG knowledge. I stare at patients' EKGs all day long, so learning this so early on was huge," she said. Keep shining, Lauren! CVCC is incredibly proud of you and all you've accomplished.

Written By: Makayla Robertson, CVCC Media Specialist

