

Natalie Russell

My name is Natalie Russell and I'm from Natchez, MS. I'm in Nursing School at Mississippi College, graduating in December 2020. I found out about Team LC from a Facebook post on one of the Mississippi College pages. When I started working for Lauren, I had just been accepted into and was beginning nursing school. Before working with Lauren, I had countless opportunities to work with people who have a disability. My mom is an occupational therapist and I have grown up going to work with her and spending time at the clinic where she works. I have also worked with a group called Challengers League that helps individuals with disabilities play softball/baseball. My family and I also have a good friend with Cerebral Palsy. I also go to Haiti on mission trips and we work closely with the disability community, in particular we have worked with a little girl who had spina bifida. Also, my senior year of high school I went to a place called Give Kids the World in Orlando, Florida and volunteered with our student council to serve children and their families with cancer and disabilities. What made me nervous about working for Lauren was not so much taking care of all of her physical needs but how we would get along. Would our personalities clash? Would she like me? Do I do a good enough job? Do I talk to much? Does she talk to much? Will we be able to stand each other? All of these questions played through my mind. After my first shift, I knew that I had nothing to worry about. Lauren and her family made me feel like I was and am still part of one of their own. So, my fear and anxiety went away and I felt like this was a place that I could grow spiritually, mentally, and physically. Lauren and I have a special bond and sometimes that got us into some trouble. We were/are similar in many ways and complemented each other very well. If you are nervous about this, take a leap of faith and see where it takes you. While working for Lauren, I learned to be myself, love others unconditionally, and to make the most out of every experience. The time I spent working for Lauren opened my eyes to a world of possibilities that I never thought possible. I learned to dream big, not just for myself, but for all. People with disabilities have the same rights as I have to reach and touch their goals, they might just have to achieve them differently. It wasn't until I worked with Lauren that I truly saw this happen. Lauren has shown me what it looks like to reach for your dreams and touch them. I have learned to never give up on a dream and that everything is worth fighting for. Working for Team LC has prepared me for working as a nurse in so many ways. I have learned how to be empathetic, compassionate, to fight and advocate as hard as I can, and to love people as Jesus Christ loves me. This team has prepared me for my mission field. This team has shown me grace, love, and given me wisdom and motivation when I had none. Team LC has prepared me to be a team player and given me the opportunities to have a servant's heart. I have gained so many other things but have no words. I am incredibly grateful for the time I spent at Team LC. If in doubt about applying, turn it over to the Lord, pray about it, and have no regrets!