

VALERIE PATTERSON: I was having my normal colonoscopy and the first thing he said was, Ms. Patterson, you have an irregular heartbeat. You need to go see your cardiologist. I'm Valerie Patterson. I work as a communications manager in Duke Energy's corporate communications organization, and I've been with Duke Energy for 34 years. The first thing I thought was, oh no, what's going on with my heart? And then I was told that I needed a pacemaker, and for about a year it worked very well, but unfortunately my health started to decline. I was having a shortness of breath, not able to walk as long distances as I normally had. My heart was in very bad shape. It was failing. It's shocking to hear that I would have to have a heart transplant. The day that I was discharged from the hospital was a big, it's a big day on the heart floor. Because you go out and it's ceremonial that you ring the bell. The fact that I've had this major procedure, and had the coverage and support I need, says a lot about Duke Energy, about the benefits that they offer, and really helping employees holistically to make it through some of life's greatest challenges. It's more than just doctors' visits. It's more than just hospital stays. It's a whole platform, a whole menu of other types of support services. So whether it's diet and nutrition or diabetes management, or anything that's health related, physical or mental. At Duke Energy we're very fortunate to have United Healthcare which also has My Health Connect. There's a team of professionals who know everything about our health care plans. Even when I was in the hospital, I was called by a registered nurse with UnitedHealthcare who kept in touch with me along my whole journey. I am back to walking. I have to walk. It's a requirement that you take care of the gift that you've been given. And I owe it all to a great company, great benefits, my faith, great people that take care of me, and just really, really being blessed to be here.