



ST. JOSEPH HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING
ANNUAL REPORT 2021

“Never give up on a dream just because of the time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyway.”

– Earl Nightingale

DEAR ALUMNI & FRIENDS,

Our ultimate goal at St. Joseph School of Nursing is to help our students achieve their dreams. Whether they are pursuing a call to care for others, striving to better support their families, or honoring the care they or a loved one received in a time of need — we support them with every resource we have.

Nursing is a noble calling, and no one reaches their goals alone. It takes a dedicated group of staff, faculty, alumni, friends, family and donors to fully support our students. Therefore, this year we’re renewing our efforts to connect with and stay in touch with alumni, donors and friends of the program with our annual report.

This report shares inspiring stories of how we’re preparing our students to reach their goals and achieve their dreams. I hope these personal anecdotes will motivate you to continue to generously support the school of nursing. Please email sjn-son_info@sjnh.org to submit a class note, sign up for the alumni council or learn more about how philanthropic efforts are making a difference in our school, for our students and in our community.



With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vickie Fieler".

Vickie Fieler, PhD, RN

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Building a Career on Her Nursing School Foundation Kathleen “Kat” Finn, ASN ’16, BSN

“I’ve wanted to be in the medical field since I was a small child,” says Kat Finn, ASN ’16, BSN. “My grandma and aunt were nurses, and my dad was a firefighter who provided medical aid as part of his job. I enjoy helping people and I like to learn. There is always something new to learn in nursing.”

Nurses constantly need to keep learning, explains Kat, who earned her associate’s degree in nursing in 2016. That is what makes the St. Joseph School of Nursing important. “You learn best on the job, but nursing school is the foundation for that. It teaches you what resources are available and how to best use them. It also offers insight into the endless opportunities available in the nursing field.”

“When I attended the St. Joseph Hospital School of Nursing, the entire team really listened to students’ feedback on the program,” adds Kat. “They want to make the program the best it can be. Proactively asking for and evaluating student feedback was an important part of that.”

After graduating, Kat worked at St. Joseph Hospital for 10 years, most recently as an RN in Emergency Services. “There were a few hard years with the pandemic,” Kat says. She recently changed jobs and is happy to explore an opportunity outside of her comfort zone. “This latest journey is going to challenge me in a new way.”

Kat is now a travel nurse, working with Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital in Needham, Massachusetts, while also working per diem at St. Joseph Hospital and Nashua Ambulatory Surgical Center. “I really like being a travel nurse. It sounds counterintuitive, but working three jobs gives me more time and better work-life balance. It’s been a long, challenging two years. This year I promised myself to put my own mental and physical health first and be the very best nurse I can be for my patients.”



“When I attended the St. Joseph Hospital School of Nursing, the entire team really listened to students’ feedback on the program.”

LIBRARY EXPANDS TO BETTER SERVE DIVERSE STUDENT BODY

The school's library has purchased dozens of new textbooks, reference materials and clinical resources – acquiring 264 new items! Thanks to a St. Marguerite d'Youville Grant from Covenant Health, the library's collection now includes updated nursing texts and multiple copies of textbooks.

The new resources were thoughtfully chosen to reflect the diverse student body and focus on current community health issues. In an effort to best capture the nursing topics of interest and cultural relevance to students, the students were asked to suggest texts that would be meaningful. Every book that was suggested was purchased by the librarian.

"We are so grateful to have received a St. Marguerite d'Youville Grant," notes Mary Ann Sullivan, DA, the school's librarian. "Our library is now completely current, which is critical. We have purchased books that help students with their nursing and general education courses, as well as with the Next Generation NCLEX exams. The brand-new books on the shelves are attracting student attention. Quite literally, five times as many books are being signed out from the library. There are also always books on the library tables, evidence that students are using them."

This new influx of scholastic materials has been especially important for those students with limited financial resources. Having multiple and new copies of key texts available for library circulation has eased the purchasing requirement for some students and minimized their out-of-pocket expenses.

Gifts to the School of Nursing Equipment Fund, which also support the library and its resources, may be made online at stjosephhospital.com/give or by using the enclosed envelope.

"We are so grateful to have received a St. Marguerite d'Youville Grant."

– Mary Ann Sullivan, DA, the school's librarian



CARE ACT FUNDING SHARED DIRECTLY WITH STUDENTS IN FINANCIAL NEED

St. Joseph Hospital School of Nursing gratefully received more than \$989,000 in federal CARES Act grants during 2020 and 2021.

The pandemic was a challenge for all health care workers, including our students and staff, and the funds we received helped us forge on and educate our students.

The demands of our intensive programs make it difficult for students to also hold full-time jobs. Many students are either changing careers, working part time in a health care setting while in school and/or supporting a family at home. We remained dedicated to supporting our students through this difficult time by utilizing more than half of the CARES grants to fund student scholarships.

"Last year, when the COVID relief grants became available to health care students, I encouraged everyone to apply," says class vice president Brandon Martin '22.

"I didn't want to see any of my fellow students, who have worked so hard to get here, have to stop attending classes because they couldn't afford tuition."

The remainder of the funds were used to better serve students in the pandemic environment. This included offering distance learning tools, including laptops, PPE, additional class times to limit class sizes, and enhanced faculty and staff training.



Students in Simulation Lab



SUPPORTING OUR NEWEST HEALTH CARE HEROES

Bolstering the School of Nursing Scholarship Fund

The pandemic has challenged all of us, and our students are no exception. The CARES scholarship funds were a very important resource for our students in financial need. When this program ended in the summer of 2021, it became apparent the need for student scholarships was still present. During its fall annual appeal, St. Joseph Hospital reached out to donors, alumni and friends for gifts to help bolster our scholarship fund.

Our community came together to meet the \$7,500 matching gift challenge that John Jurczyk, president of St. Joseph Hospital, offered in support of the scholarship fund. In total, \$32,000 was raised for student scholarships! This included a leadership gift from hospital board member Art Urschel; the establishment of a new scholarship named for the FACTS company in honor of their gift; and an increased commitment from retired physician Roger Dionne, MD, who funds his scholarship each year.

Thank you to everyone who made a gift. By investing in our



Maggie Paré and Cosmo Rowell

students, you invested in the future health of our community!

Some thoughts from two of the students you've helped this year:

"I have been working as an EMT for several years and decided I was interested in psychiatric care. Everyone told me St. Joseph School of Nursing was the place to go! I love the program for its small size and the personal connection I have to the staff. I travel 120 miles round trip to attend my classes. My scholarship money has been incredibly helpful in offsetting that expense."

– Cosmo Rowell

"I was attending another university program when COVID hit. I lost my drive to learn while stuck in online classes. My mentor recommended I apply to St. Joseph School of Nursing where I could learn hands-on. I chose nursing because, instead of treating the illness, you have the power to treat the whole person — and I think that's beautiful. In addition to school, I work two jobs. My scholarship money allows me to devote more time to my studies."

– Maggie Paré

Gifts to the School of Nursing Scholarship Fund may be made online at stjosephhospital.com/give or by using the enclosed envelope.

CLASS NOTES

The annual Christmas Basket Project continued this year as faculty and students provided a food basket and gifts to neighbors in need during the Christmas season.

Kathleen "Kat" Finn '16 started a new job as a travel nurse at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital.

Thembaletu "Themba" Victor Dhiwayo, RN '19, passed away after a motorcycle accident on June 20, 2021. We are honored his family requested memorial gifts be made to the School of Nursing as a tribute to him and in honor of his love for nursing.

Ray LaRue, RN '21, passed away in May 2022. He was passionate to be a nurse and worked hard to achieve his goals.

The class of 2021 collected socks, toiletries, snacks and games for gift baskets donated to residents and staff at the Hillsborough County Nursing Home in Goffstown, NH where students complete their first clinical experience.

Submit a Class Note

Did you get married, have a baby, change jobs, earn an award or further your education? We'd love to hear about it and share it with your classmates. Please send your class notes to SJN-SON_info@sjnh.org.





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