

VITAL SIGNS

WVU SCHOOL OF NURSING • 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW



Dean's Message

Mountaineers Forever



As nurses, we are lifelong learners. Continuing education is essential for us to stay

up-to-date with the latest technology, to improve patient outcomes with best practices, and to grow as individuals.

At the West Virginia University School of Nursing, lifelong learning is a tenet we instill in our students, and our faculty certainly lead by example. Thanks to their efforts, we have incorporated two new elective courses, Advanced Lifesaving Technologies and Emerging Technologies and Innovations in Healthcare; one new continuing professional development course, Holistic Nursing Care; and a new Expedited Summer Pathway for BSN students.

Every year, the WVU School of Nursing continues to grow. We always strive to meet the needs of both our students and our patient populations. To say I am proud of the work we have accomplished together is an understatement.

In this year's edition of *Vital Signs*, we highlight some of the top accomplishments of our campus locations and programs. For example, our DNP Nurse Anesthetist program received the highest accreditation status available, a total of 10 years, by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs. And across all BSN and Accelerated BSN programs, our 2024 graduates

"Nurses. . . unless in it we are making progress every year, every month, every week, take my word for it we are going back. The more experience we gain, the more progress we can make."

— Florence Nightingale

received an average 99% first-time pass rate on their NCLEX-RN exam.

I would also like to congratulate Dr. Laura Wood, Class of 1977, for being inducted into the WVU Academy of Distinguished Alumni this year. I was honored to stand alongside her during the ceremony, and we are so glad to call her one of our own.

We want to thank our alumni, donors, and friends for their continued support throughout the years. We truly could not do the outstanding work we do without you. You are invaluable members of the WVU School of Nursing family.

Once a Mountaineer, Always a Mountaineer.

Let's Go!

Tara Hulsey
PhD, RN, CNE, FAAN
Dean and E. Jane Martin Endowed Professor
WVU School of Nursing

VITALSIGNS

Vital Signs is an annual publication produced by the West Virginia University School of Nursing.

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ON THE COVER

Nursing student Lauren Colgan listens to the heartbeat of a child manikin in the WV STEPS Center, where students practice their skills hands-on before working with live patients.

New courses, pathways provide new opportunities for students

Over the past year, the WVU School of Nursing has incorporated two new elective courses, Advanced Lifesaving Technologies and Emerging Technologies and Innovations in Healthcare; one new continuing professional development course, Holistic Nursing Care; and a new Expedited Summer Pathway for BSN students.

Advanced Lifesaving Technologies, offered to senior nursing students, is an introduction to the technology and equipment used in the ICU and the roles and responsibilities of ICU teams. Led by Dr. Patricia “Joy” Maramba, the course is asynchronous but requires three on-campus days, which will feature simulations or clinical time in the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit at WVU Medicine J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital. Maramba said this could provide an opportunity for nursing students on different campuses to see the academic teaching center.

NSG 470 was created in partnership with a team from WVU Medicine’s Heart and Vascular Institute. The HVI team: Director of Cardiac Nursing Services, the Manager and Clinical Preceptors of the CVICU

and Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) team members are part of the curation.

Emerging Technologies and Innovations in Healthcare, also for seniors, was designed by Dr. Heather Carter-Templeton. “The ultimate goal for this course is to help facilitate cross-disciplinary experiences with others, such as those in engineering and business analytics,” she said. “Nurses need to have a seat at the table to have the opportunity to collaborate early on with the design of technologies and innovations we use in clinical spaces.”

She said because nurses have more contact with patients than nearly any other healthcare professional, having input in the process is especially important. She hopes this course will help establish a better understanding of the technology and business operations, as well as introduce students to existing resources

on campus, like the WVU LaunchLab.

Holistic Nursing Care, a new continuing professional development course, is a fully online, six-week program designed for nurses interested in expanding their knowledge of holistic nursing practices.



“Nurses need to have a seat at the table to have the opportunity to collaborate early on with the design of technologies and innovations we use in clinical spaces.”

– Dr. Heather Carter-Templeton
Chair, WVU School of Nursing
Adult Health Department

Upon successful completion, participants will earn 35 contact hours and receive a certificate recognizing their achievement. This course also serves as certification review for those planning to pursue national certification in holistic nursing.

The course covers key topics, such as mind-body interventions, the role of spirituality in patient care, complementary and alternative therapies, and self-care strategies for nurses. The course is open to nurses from all backgrounds who wish to enhance their practice and knowledge with evidence-based holistic interventions.



Excellence in Academics

Excellence in academics continues across all programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels at the WVU School of Nursing.

The DNP Nurse Anesthetist program received the highest accreditation status available, a total of 10 years, by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs.



“Receiving accreditation at this level illustrates the quality of the curriculum, the dedication of our faculty, and the preparedness of our students after graduation,” Dean Hulsey said. “Providing a pathway for students to become Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists is a tremendous asset for the WVU School of Nursing, and I am grateful our program director, Dr. Aaron Ostrowski, has made it possible,” Hulsey added.

The Nurse Anesthetist program was recognized in 2025 by U.S. News and World Report as one of the top 2025 Best Graduate Schools, ranking No. 68 in the country.

Across all BSN and ABSN campus locations, 2024 graduates received an average 99% first-time pass rate on their NCLEX-RN exam. The official results from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing show the following results: Morgantown Campus ABSN – 100%; Bridgeport Campus ABSN – 100%; Beckley Campus BSN – 100%; Morgantown Campus BSN – 99.18%; and Keyser Campus BSN – 95.83%.

The BSN program is a traditional four-year degree offered at the Beckley, Keyser and Morgantown campus locations of the WVU School of Nursing. The ABSN program, offered on the Bridgeport and Morgantown campuses, is an 18-month accelerated program for current bachelor’s degree holders who wish to become baccalaureate-prepared registered nurses.

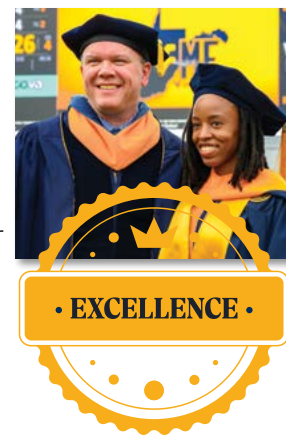
“These pass rates show how well prepared our graduates are to excel in the nursing profession,” said Dr. Brad Phillips, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs. One special highlight is the Bridgeport Campus, as these results come from the first graduating cohort.



At the graduate level, the 2024 Family Nurse Practitioner graduates received an overall 96% first-time pass rate on their licensure exams. These

graduates include the Master of Science in Nursing – FNP program, as well as the FNP Post-Graduate Certificate program. Their exams are administered by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board and the American Nurses Credentialing Center, and the results are reported by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

“Family nurse practitioners are an essential part of providing and improving healthcare to a diverse patient population,” said Dr. Stacy Huber, Associate Dean of Curriculum. “Thanks to Dean Hulsey’s leadership, our program director, and dedicated faculty, we are able to provide high-quality pathways to advance practice.”



Nursing alumna inducted into WVU Academy of Distinguished Alumni

During a February ceremony, WVU School of Nursing alumna Dr. Laura J. Wood was inducted into the WVU Academy of Distinguished Alumni. Wood, who received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1977, was recognized at the Erickson Alumni Center alongside four other honorees: Linda Arnold, Luke Frazier, Sharon Burmeister Lord and Diana Murphy.

"The fact that I somehow have found my way into this group is surprising to me and very meaningful," said Wood, also referencing the two nursing alumni who have been inducted before her, Drs. Diana Mason and Bernadette Melynck.

Wood serves as executive vice president of patient care operations, system chief nurse executive, and Spring

Carpenter Chair for Nursing at Boston Children's Hospital. In this role, she sets strategic direction for the world's leading pediatric academic health system, overseeing quality, safety, nursing practice and patient care delivery.

"On behalf of the WVU School of Nursing, we are honored to celebrate Dr. Wood's achievements," Dean Hulsey



said. “Her work in nursing has led her to impact countless lives, and we are so grateful for the School of Nursing’s role in her nursing education and career.”

Wood’s progressive health care leadership contributions span three renowned academic health systems, including Johns Hopkins Children’s Center, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, and the University of Pennsylvania Health System. She also led clinical business development as vice president for clinical solutions within Siemens Healthcare – now Oracle, spanning 1,000-plus U.S. health systems.

Wood credits the WVU School of Nursing with the strong foundation for the trajectory of her nursing career. Upon her graduation, she received both the school’s Faculty and Alumni Leadership awards.

“The very specific curriculum in the School of Nursing at WVU was much more clinically focused than many other programs,” Wood said. “By the time I finished as a senior and started as a new graduate at Johns Hopkins, I was in a much different place than many of the other baccalaureate-prepared nurses and new graduates who were my peers. It was almost like I had an extra year of experience.”

She earned a Master of Science degree in maternal-child nursing from the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and a

Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from Johns Hopkins University, where she was honored with Distinguished Alumna awards from both the School of Nursing and the University. Wood is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Executive Nurse Fellow alumna and an elected Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing.

Wood serves as president and board chair of the American Nurses Credentialing Center, overseeing credentialing and ANCC’s Magnet Recognition and Pathway to Excellence programs with an aim to advance healthy and safe work environments in the U.S. and worldwide. Other recent board services include Boston Children’s Hospital, CRICO Risk Management, the Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research and Simmons University, among others.

Wood shares her “three Ps” — presence, positivity and persistence — for success.

“Every day of COVID, I was there, 12-plus hour days. Most other departments, aside from nursing and physicians, fled. It was a dangerous and challenging time, but our



nurses were on the front line, figuring out personal protective equipment and how to take care of our patients. I think leadership presence is the most important thing. I don’t always have the answer, but I can show up.”

Wood and her husband, Lawrence Quartana, live in Belmont, Massachusetts, near their adult son and many extended family members throughout New England, and are devoted, lifelong golden retriever parents and film enthusiasts. Wood also remains lifelong friends with many of her fellow WVU School of Nursing graduates.

Sophomore aids in life-saving assistance for friend on campus

Sophomore nursing student Mason Solliday provided life-saving assistance for his friend who unexpectedly collapsed while on campus in February.

While eating lunch, Solliday learned that someone had collapsed outside of the Mountainlair. When he went to see if he could help, he recognized the person as his friend Grant.

"He was completely unresponsive and lacked a pulse, so I started doing chest compressions," said Solliday, of Green Bank in Pocahontas County. "I performed chest compressions until the first ambulance arrived and one of the first responders took over for me. At this point, I texted everyone I knew to be praying for him."



CPR EMERGENCY STEPS



Check for responsiveness



Call 9-11



Check for a pulse



Give 30 compressions



Give 2 breaths



Repeat until EMS arrives

The first responder asked him to take over chest compressions again while they focused on getting medications ready.

"I have taken CPR classes prior to coming to college, but the most recent class I took was the School of Nursing's required class this past fall," Solliday said. "When put into this situation, I was surprised by how quickly my prior training kept me calm and allowed me to intervene."

He said he is especially grateful for the life-saving training he was able to administer, but he gives credit to God for the intervention.

"I am so grateful to the EMS personnel who saved him and to the WVU School of Nursing for properly teaching me how to stay calm and perform CPR," Solliday said. "Most of all I would like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for providing me with peace and a clear head in the moment and for timing everything the way He did."

In June, the Monongalia County EMS presented their inaugural Lifesaver Award to Solliday and the other first responders who helped save Grant's life.



SENIOR NURSING STUDENT TO JOIN U.S. NAVY



Victoria Weser always knew she wanted to help people, but college wasn't initially part of her plan. "The plan was to become an EMT or a 911 operator," said Weser, of Wexford, Pennsylvania. "My godmother has been a nurse for 40-plus years, and she asked, 'Why don't you give it a shot?'"

That simple question changed Weser's trajectory. She was accepted to the WVU School of Nursing, and she said she's loved it ever since.

"I've loved being in the clinical setting, seeing different patient populations," Weser said. "I just like knowing I'm making even a small difference."

As she considered her career path, she wanted to explore options outside the hospital setting. With members on both sides of her family having served in the military, Weser has always been interested in serving her country.

"As I researched the Navy, I realized there are opportunities to go overseas and see different hospitals and different patient populations. They also offer student loan repayment and opportunities for grad school," Weser said. "It's also about serving your country, and in my personal opinion, I feel like that's a really great honor to have."

After her graduation in December 2025, Weser will attend Navy Officer Development School and then be stationed for the next four years in either Virginia, Maryland or California, depending on the area of need.

"Originally, I thought I would work in Pennsylvania, but now [enlisting with the Navy], I feel like I have the whole world," Weser said. "I'm also looking forward to helping that patient population, who are prone to PTSD, depression and anxiety. It's a male-dominated field, where showing weakness is often discouraged. I want to help decrease the stigma of seeking help by being someone who will listen to their concerns without judgment or ridicule."



GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

SERVING HER COUNTRY

Abigail Ott

Abigail Ott, a WVU Army ROTC Cadet, was recently commissioned as a second lieutenant.

Ott, of Haymarket, Virginia, graduated with a BSN and will assess onto active duty as an Army Nurse Corps officer. She was a three-year Army ROTC National High School Scholarship recipient.

The WVU Army ROTC Mountaineer Battalion commissioned Ott and 18 other cadets as second lieutenants May 14 during the annual Spring Commissioning Ceremony.

Army ROTC is a four-year leadership development program. During classes, leadership labs, physical training and field training exercises, cadets learn what it takes to lead others, motivate groups and conduct missions as an officer in the U.S. Army.

Cadets are required to complete a 35-day leadership assessment at Fort Knox, Kentucky, known as Advanced Camp. Upon earning their degrees, cadets commission as second lieutenants in the U.S. Army on Active duty, in the Army National Guard or in the Army Reserve.

PROVIDING CARE *Across The Globe*



Our dedicated faculty and students at the WVU School of Nursing know no bounds when it comes to delivering high-quality care to those in need. Each year, Associate Dean of Faculty Practice Dr. Emily Barnes leads a team of nurse practitioner students for the medical missions trip to Honduras.

The team works with the Carolina Honduras Health Foundation (CHHF), a non-profit organization that provides continuity of care by sending 18 teams a year to Honduras to provide care and provide telehealth services.

The School of Nursing team for 2025 included 14 members from the U.S., four of whom were Master of Science in Nursing-Family Nurse Practitioner students, including Betsy Gambino, Haley Hansrote, Rhonda Reid and Carol-Ann Thompson. Together, the team cared for 405 patients and dispensed 1,771 prescriptions.

Dr. Barnes said each of the four students logged 40 precepted clinical hours toward their practicum requirements, which helped meet a critical need of the MSN-FNP program. Students gained experience providing care with an interpreter, a learning opportunity that may or may not

occur in other clinical experiences and often isn't from someone who understands the unique local culture.

"The clinical experiences included caring for patients with urgent, acute, chronic, and health promotion issues," Barnes said. "The health issues included both common primary care issues, such as hypertensive crisis, upper respiratory infections, diabetes mellitus, inadequate nutrition, and tropical diseases, such as dengue, leishmaniasis and intestinal parasites. This range of concerns provided unique experiences to the students. They gained proficiency with health issues common in the United States and less common diseases that they may encounter as global migration continues to increase."

Patient care covered a range of ages and people, from 21 days old through 80-plus-years old and included pregnant women. Students also experienced observing and performing procedures such as cerumen impaction removal, Nexplanon removal and joint injection. It can be challenging for students to gain experience with procedures, as the need for a procedure is unpredictable, Barnes said; therefore, this opportunity was highly valuable to their education.

When asked about their impact on the community, one nurse practitioner student said a memorable moment for her was "helping a man with extensive knee pain that works in the fields each day by administering a steroid injection under the supervision of the preceptor."

Students also worked collaboratively with an interprofessional and international team that included a physician, a family medicine resident, a pharmacist, a lab tech, interpreters, nurses, and nurse practitioners. The amount of collaboration on the team exceeds what is typical in primary care in the United States, which led to an appreciation for the strengths of the other disciplines. It also provided first-hand experience of how care is enhanced with interprofessional collaboration.

"The clinics are in resource-limited areas in which access to care is limited, and almost all patients live on less than the U.S. equivalent of \$2 a day," Barnes explained. "Many patients do not have access to safe drinking water and get exposed to many environmental hazards such as burning trash, cooking over open fires, poor road conditions, and extreme heat. Providing care in



this environment gives students experience with critical thinking and decision-making related to resource allocation.”

Additionally, students must consider the impact of social determinants of health. While there, the students cared for a patient who had symptoms of a sexually transmitted infection. Testing was not available, so they had to consider the cost/risk versus the benefits of presumptive treatment or not. Without access to many diagnostic tests and imaging, students had to rely on their own advanced assessment and diagnostic skills to appropriately care for patients.

To learn more about opportunities like these, contact Dr. Emily Barnes at ebarnes@hsc.wvu.edu.



National Institutes
of Health

Faculty Aim To Enhance Rural Home Care For Chronically Ill Through NIH Award

Three WVU nursing faculty know firsthand the difficulties faced by family caregivers and their chronically ill loved ones.

With a \$2.7 million award from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Nursing Research that is one of the largest ever for the WVU School of Nursing, the faculty researchers aim to support these families while increasing access to care in the rural reaches of the Mountain State by testing an integrated, nurse-led intervention for family home care management of end-stage heart failure and palliative care.

"We want to know if there's a way we can help relieve the suffering for these individuals and how we can support family caregivers," said Ubolrat "Diu" Piamjariyakul, Associate Dean For Research And Associate Professor in the WVU School of Nursing and principal investigator for the study. "We will evaluate a combination of evidence-based nursing interventions that have proven effective in palliative home care."

The project resonates professionally and personally for Piamjariyakul and colleagues

Stephanie Young, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Family/Community Health Department, and Angel Smothers, Associate Dean Of Community Engagement And Clinical Associate Professor. All three have served as primary caregivers in the homes of their chronically ill family members.

Through their lived experiences, as well as their previous studies using nursing science to develop and test nurse-led interventions, the three said they hope to improve family caregivers' and their loved ones' overall health and well-being, including reducing depression and anxiety and monitoring and managing end-of-life symptoms.

"That's what drives us to this type of project because we want the result to be meaningful and improve the health of others who have similar experiences," Piamjariyakul said.

Piamjariyakul's previous research tested interventions supporting quality of life improvements for individuals experiencing lung disease and heart failure, as well as effects on their caregivers. The current clinical trial brings together those intervention components and tests the sustainability of the

interventions by incorporating a volunteer visitor program and faith community nurses.

The volunteer visitor component utilizes trained, nonclinical community volunteers to help reinforce health care plans and help family members connect with local resources. These volunteers also work in tandem with faith community nurses, who are registered nurses with additional training to improve access to care in their communities.

Smothers, who grew up in the southern coalfields of West Virginia, has observed how the lack of access to health care in rural areas has contributed to poor health outcomes.

"In the rural parts of West Virginia, many families can't connect with health care specialists," Smothers said. "This clinical trial is designed to equip families with the skills they need to have palliative care at home and learn how to connect with available resources, like hospice."

Young explained that caregiver burden is widely recognized, and research has shown those individuals have higher mortality and morbidity rates than their non-caregiving peers.



... we want the result to be meaningful and improve the health of others who have similar experiences.

Ubolrat "Diu"
Piamjariyakul,
Associate Dean



... when the caregiver is in a better place, health outcomes are better for the patient.

Stephanie Young,
Clinical Assistant Professor



"Although caregivers are happy to take care of their loved ones, oftentimes it's 24/7 work, and it can be hard, depending on the needs," Young said. "It's not just home health care. It can be shopping or taking care of finances and hygiene. It's important to address caregiver burden for these families because when the caregiver is in a better place, health outcomes are better for the patient."

Researchers have collaborated with others from throughout the University, including physicians and biostatisticians in the WVU School of Medicine and health economists in the WVU School of Public Health.

Across the four-year study, the primary goal is improving the quality of life and well-being of the patients and their caregivers. Additionally, the study will track hospitalization rates and positively impacted health outcomes. The researchers also plan to help patients and their families gain a better understanding of end-of-life care.



This clinical trial is designed to equip families with the skills they need to have palliative care at home. . .

Angel Smothers,
Associate Dean



FIRST STUDENT GRADUATES FROM WVU'S INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP WITH ARELLANO UNIVERSITY

Last year, the WVU School of Nursing welcomed Elmira Tolentino, an international nursing student from the Arellano University-International Nursing Program, to complete her final year of the 3-plus-1 program.

The inaugural program launched at Alderson-Broadbent University in 2005, but with the announcement of ABU's closure in 2023, the WVU School of Nursing offered a teach-out for their international students.

Arellano University, based in the Philippines, saw the quality of the nursing program and decided to partner with the WVU School of Nursing to continue the international nursing program. Since the new partnership began, Tolentino is the first student to attend WVU.

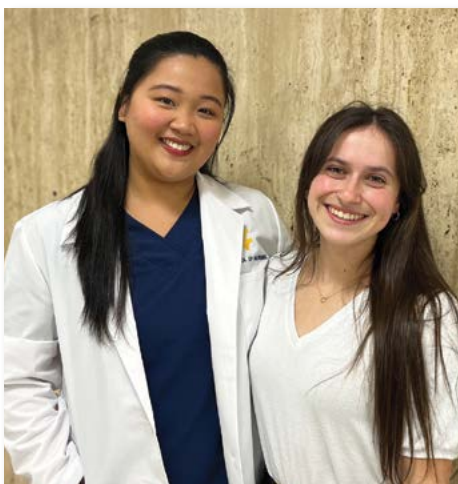
"As our first global educational partnership, we are so excited to welcome Elmira and her peers to our Morgantown campus," said Dean Tara Hulsey. "This mutually beneficial partnership provides

“This mutually beneficial partnership provides opportunities for our students to work with students from another culture, as well as nursing employment opportunities in the U.S. for Arellano students.”

— **Tara Hulsey**
Dean and E. Jane Martin
Endowed Professor, WVU School of Nursing

opportunities for our students to work with students from another culture, as well as nursing employment opportunities in the U.S. for Arellano students.”

The students spend their first three years at Arellano University, where they receive the same nursing curriculum as they would at the WVU School of Nursing. For their senior year, the students travel to Morgantown on a student visa to complete the program.



Tolentino received her first degree in hospitality back in 2018. When COVID-19 hit, the hospitality industry suffered. She witnessed the challenges the virus posed to the healthcare industry and was inspired by the courage of healthcare professionals to return to school and pursue a career in nursing.

“My mother had cancer, so we were in the hospital a lot . . . so that was quite an impact for me, too,” Tolentino said.

Her first degree allowed her to participate in both pre- and post-graduate internships in Texas, so when searching for where to begin her nursing degree, she found the AU-INP program and was intrigued to see West Virginia.

Tolentino said she enjoyed her time at the university. She said the people were very kind and helpful. Faculty even helped her prepare for the winter season, as she had never experienced snow before. Tolentino especially enjoyed experiencing the facilities, like the simulations at the WV STEPS Center and clinical skills labs.



Adrienne Duckworth

Adrienne Duckworth, AOCNP, a two-time alumna of the WVU School of Nursing and the director of the WVU Cancer Institute Survivorship Program, was named the 2024 Advanced Practice Provider of the Year by the WVU Medicine Office of Advanced Practice Recruitment and Retention Committee.

Duckworth, a Grafton native, graduated with her BSN in 2012 and her MSN in 2014. She credits her success to the mentorship and opportunities she received at WVU, where a Leadership Studies minor encouraged by her nursing advisor helped her build interdisciplinary connections.

“Being recognized as Advanced Practice Provider of the Year is a tremendous honor,” Duckworth said. “It’s a testament to the hard work and dedication I’ve put forth over the past 10 years as part of a team making a difference every day. I feel privileged to serve the people of West Virginia and surrounding areas.”

SPREADING Smiles



WVU School of Nursing students, faculty, staff and alumni go above and beyond to make a difference in the lives of others. They continue spreading smiles wherever they go.

Whether they are volunteering for charitable organizations, collecting donations for communities in need, or spreading awareness and education, our SON family is always willing to offer a helping hand, near and far.

Keep up the great work, Mountaineers!

Top Left: Beckley Campus students and therapy dog Molly pose for a photo during WVU Day at the Legislature with the WVU Mountaineer Mascot and Monty, the WVU Tech Golden Bear.

Bottom Left: Jarena Kelly, Charleston Campus Assistant Professor, helps a young attendee locate a heartbeat during a demonstration at WVU Day at the Legislature.

Bottom Right: Beckley Campus students volunteer during Day of Service with the Salvation Army by distributing food, organizing donations and engaging with community members in need.





Top Left and Right: Students at our Beckley (left) and Bridgeport (right) campus locations showed their support of breast cancer survivors by wearing pink to spread awareness and support research efforts.



Middle Row, Left: The Morgantown Student Nurses' Association celebrated spooky season during a Trunk or Treat event on University Avenue. SNA members decorated their trunks and handed out treats to attendees.



Middle Row, Right: Morgantown SNA crafted 244 Valentine's Day cards for Morgantown Heights and Morgantown Healthcare.



Bottom Row, Left: The WVU School of Nursing hosted a collection drive for stuffed animals to benefit WVU Medicine Children's Hospital. Jacob Harper (left) and Jolene Deane (second to left) delivered the collection to help brighten the days of the young patients



Bottom Row, Right Top: Bridgeport Campus students collected and delivered needed supplies to help residents of Marion County affected by summer flooding. The event was coordinated by senior nursing student Cassidy Guire.



Bottom Row, Right Bottom : Keyser Campus students volunteered during the WVU Medicine Potomac Valley Hospital Health Careers Fair to introduce early high school students about various health professions.



Olivia Cress

Olivia Cress, a nursing student who balances her time between academics and athletics on the WVU Women's Track & Field team, made program history this year, placing in the top five for the program's pentathlon event.

"Balancing nursing school and sports can be difficult," Cress said. "At times it can be extremely strenuous, but being able to pursue what I love while performing at my best for my team makes me truly happy. I wouldn't change a thing."

Cress said she is blessed to be able to represent WVU and the state of West Virginia as a native-born and raised, especially through the ups and downs.

"To all the students who are juggling schooling, sports, jobs, and life, I encourage you to keep reaching for your goals. They are never truly out of reach. Don't give up because things look bleak; the path to success is not always lit."

Harman-Falkowski family makes lasting impact for Keyser Campus

For the past six years, the Harman-Falkowski family has generously donated funding for the WVU School of Nursing Keyser Campus, providing a wealth of simulation equipment and other materials to enhance student learning.

Pat Harman and her daughter, Terry Falkowski, made their first contribution to the school in 2019. Falkowski previously worked as the science lab manager at WVU Potomac State College, and her husband, Dr. Henry Falkowski, was a chemistry professor until he passed away a few years ago.

"We are incredibly grateful for the support of families like Pat and Terry who see the value of supporting nursing education," Dean Tara Hulsey said. "Thanks to their generous gifts, our Keyser Campus students have had access to hands-on learning tools across the lifespan."

In 2019, they provided a child skills manikin and trauma modules for pediatrics. The following year, they contributed baby dolls for maternal-infant care, as well as specialty and regular IV infusion pumps for all levels.

They donated funding for an arrhythmia simulator for critical care, a fundus trainer for OB, and a skills trainer module for all levels in 2021. The next year, they provided health promotion and wellness materials for the nursing students' capstone projects and their community course.

A "Friday Night at the ER game," which supports critical care knowledge, was donated in 2023, along with CPR training manikins (both adult and infant) for all levels in 2023. And most recently, in 2024, the Harman-Falkowski provided an infant warmer for maternal-infant care.

In all, their contributions have totaled nearly \$20,000, which has tremendously supported hands-on learning for Keyser Campus nursing students.


"The Harman-Falkowski family has been so generous in their support of our nursing students and the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program," said Dr. April Shapiro, Keyser Campus Chair. "We cannot thank them enough for the learning opportunities their donations have provided, from enhancing students' specialty care skills in pediatrics, obstetrics, and critical care to promoting their understanding of the importance of nursing's role in supporting health within communities."



Thank you



SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON RECOGNIZES DONORS, AWARD RECIPIENTS



ni Center,
scholarship

To learn how you can show your support to nursing students and student scholarships, please contact Dr. Kimberly Colebank, Director of Development for the WVU School of Nursing, at kcolebank@wvuf.org or 304-554-0237.

Cathy Boyle

"As you start to work with an underserved population... you start to see that folks have a wide variety of needs — from access to resources and connections to other organizations, such as food pantries, clothing pantries and social services," Boyle said. "Many pieces can get lost in translation during the transitional period, so we can stand in the gap and help bridge care from hospital to home."

Congratulations, CLASS OF 2025

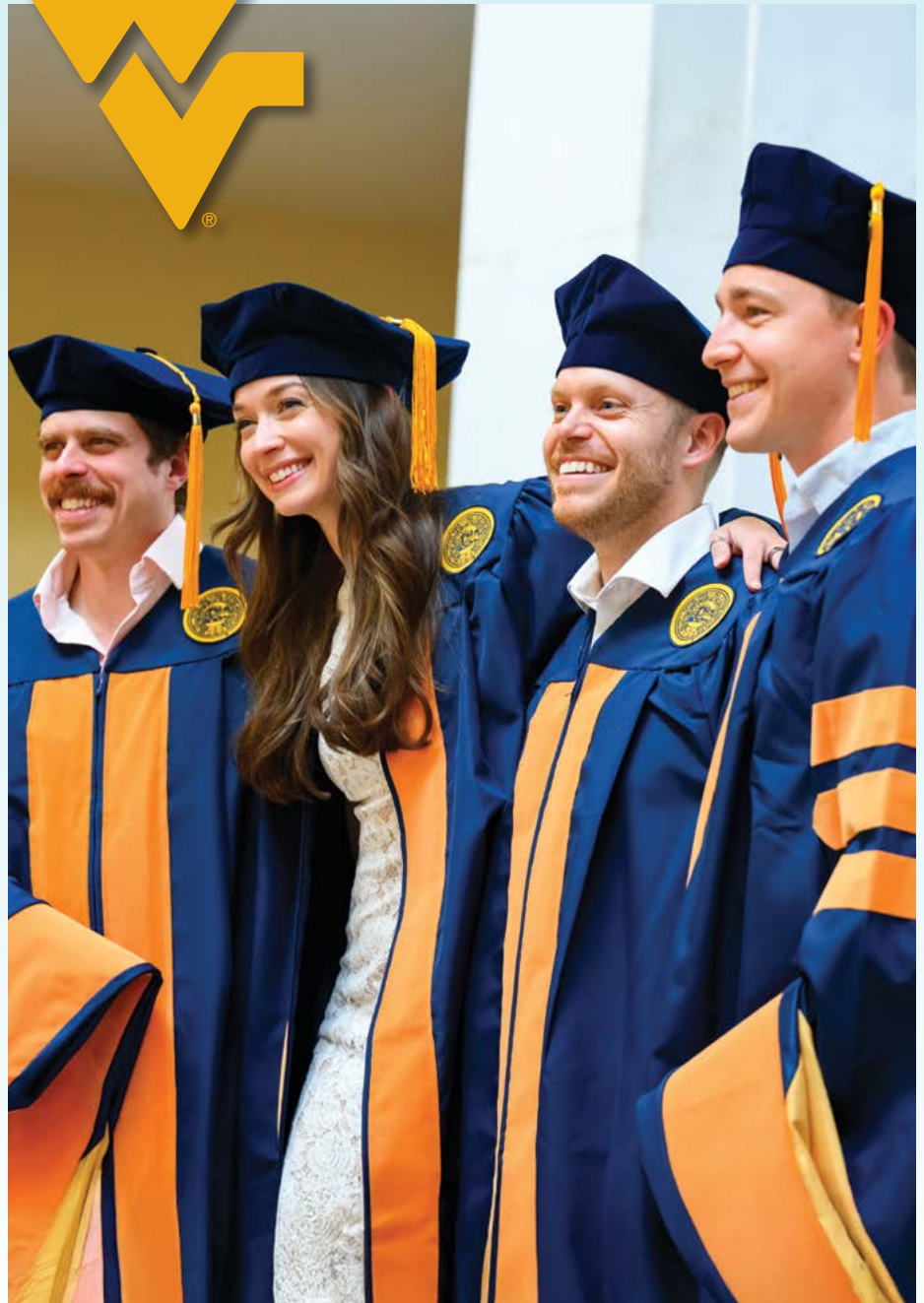
Welcome to our alumni family,
Class of 2025!

The WVU School of Nursing celebrated undergraduate and graduate level students as they earned their degrees across our campus locations in Beckley, Bridgeport, Charleston (WVU Online), Keyser and Morgantown.

No matter which campus students choose, they will be met by talented and dedicated faculty members, state-of-the-art simulation equipment, opportunities to practice their skills hands-on, peer and institutional support, and so much more.

Our School of Nursing values are Integrity, Excellence, Compassion, Respect, Engagement and Inclusivity. We encourage our alumni to continue living these values throughout their careers.

To learn more about our program options and campus locations,, visit nursing.wvu.edu/students/commencement.



Left: Beckley Campus graduates pose for a group photo before their commencement ceremony at the Beckley-Raleigh County Convention Center.

Right: Graduates from the DNP Nurse Anesthetist Program pose for photos following their August ceremony.



Top Left: Dr. Kendra Barker gives a fist bump to Accelerated BSN graduate Veronica Cyphert as she receives her diploma.



Top Right: Keyser Campus graduates pose for a group photo during their commencement ceremony at the Church-McKee Arts Center.



Second Row, Left: Beckley BSN graduates decorated their caps to showcase their "eaRNed" accomplishments.



Second Row, Middle: Morgantown Ambassadors Ella Slusser, Bella Botero and Kylie Dick show off their graduation caps.



Second Row, Right: Bridgeport Campus students celebrate following their pinning ceremony at the Robinson Grand Performing Arts Center.



Third Row, Left: Dean Tara Hulsey (left) and Chancellor Clay Marsh (right) present a nursing graduate with her diploma.



Third Row, Right: WVU Tech President T. Ramon Stuart presents Beckley Campus graduate Larisa Griffith with the 2025 Presidential Leadership Award.



Fourth Row, Left: Asa Charnik, a BSN graduate in Morgantown, poses for photos with his family following the ceremony at the WVU Coliseum.

Fourth Row, Right: DNP Nurse Anesthetist graduate Ayodele Ayeko gathers with friends and family after the August ceremony.



Beckley Campus inspires future nurses

Through a series of community-based events, our Beckley Campus is inspiring area youth to consider a career in nursing.

Every year, the Beckley Campus hosts the Southern West Virginia Junior Nursing Academy for rising eighth, ninth and tenth grade students. During the 2025 academy, hosted in conjunction with WVU Tech, students learned CPR and vital sign skills. They also visited Raleigh General Hospital and Appalachian Regional Hospital and met with AirEvac professionals.

“Junior Nursing Academy is a great way to introduce high schoolers to the profession of nursing,” said Hillary Parcell, Beckley Campus Chair. “We love hosting this event each year to allow students to get some hands-on learning experiences around nursing.”

Faculty and students also helped showcase how “science meets creativity” through interactive sessions at GEAR UP and STEM camps for eighth through eleventh graders.

Professors Cynthia Clark and Linda Angus led sessions on The Cardiac Cycle, Stop the Bleed training, and Simulation Lab tours. Student participants included Kyndal Adkins, Bailee Bailes, Nathaniel Crowder, Lyndsey Maiola, and Solomon Daniel.

“It was amazing to see creativity and science come together, with participants illustrating anatomical concepts in such unique and thoughtful ways,” Angus said. “Professors introduced students to the artwork and legacy of Henri Matisse, using his bold, expressive style to explore how art and language can enhance communication and empathy in healthcare.”



Campers were invited to create their own expressive artwork—some inspired by the heart and its rhythms, others by their own unique perspectives. Angus said it was a beautiful fusion of STEM and the arts: “We’re proud to foster the next generation of creative, compassionate professionals!”





Updating our Mission, Vision and Values

To help guide the WVU School of Nursing forward in teaching, learning, scholarship, practice and service, a faculty task force, along with input from alumni, recently updated the school's Mission, Vision and Values statements:

Our Mission

The mission of the WVU School of Nursing is to improve the health of West Virginians, as well as our regional and global communities, through the delivery of excellent, student-centered programs and evidence-based teaching, scholarship, and service.

Our Vision

The WVU School of Nursing envisions improving the quality of life across all populations by addressing the social determinants of health through nurse-led policy, education, research, service, and practice initiatives.

Our Values

The WVU School of Nursing is an organization that values integrity, excellence, compassion, respect, engagement, and inclusivity. We commit to addressing the unique needs of the students and populations we serve and to creating an environment where individuality is encouraged, ethics are prioritized, and learning, discovery, and innovation can flourish.



Robin Elkins

PhD student Robin Elkins was selected as one of the 2024-2026 Jonas Scholars.

Jonas Nursing is a philanthropic initiative that works toward providing financial assistance, leadership development and networking support for nursing faculty, researchers and practicing nurses.

"I am honored to be selected to join the 2024-2026 cohort of Jonas Scholars," Elkins said. "The resources it provides will enable me to pursue my goals and make a difference."

Elkins wants to help make change in her research areas: the intersection of obesity, weight bias, chronic disease and social determinants of health. When intervening for obesity, she would like to see the removal of bias and blame, more consideration of any barriers, and looking at patients from different perspectives.

"This will help me pursue my goals and continue to learn," Elkins said. "I plan to continue moving forward and not stop until things improve with education, treatment, and policies."



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WVU is an EEO/Affirmative Action Employer — Minority/Female/Disability/Veteran. The WVU Board of Governors is the governing body of WVU. The Higher Education Policy Commission in West Virginia is responsible for developing, establishing and overseeing the implementation of a public policy agenda for the state's four-year colleges and universities. WVU is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Many WVU programs hold specialized accreditation.