



## Supporting Saratoga Hospital's Nursing Scholarship Program

Saratoga Hospital's Golf Invitational combines a spectacular day of golf at the award-winning Saratoga National Golf Club with the opportunity to benefit a very worthy cause: our Nursing Scholarship Program. This event is one of the region's most successful tournaments, typically sells out, and attracts business and community leaders from the Capital Region and beyond. In 2017, the event raised a record-breaking \$158,642 and had more than 300 golfers and dinner guests in attendance.

### An Investment in Nursing Education and Our Community

Through the Nursing Scholarship Program, we invest in some of our best, most promising nurses and help them realize their dreams of higher education. This investment produces a nursing workforce whose knowledge, skills, and compassion have a direct, positive impact on patient care.

A recent study revealed a link between better-educated nurses and fewer patient deaths: for every 10% increase in bachelor's degree nurses, researchers saw a 7% decline in mortality.<sup>1</sup> Nurses who continue their education tend to have a better understanding of the challenges of today's healthcare environment—and are better equipped to respond with innovative, evidence-based solutions. For example, by implementing national best practices, Saratoga Hospital has achieved the lowest congestive heart failure readmission rates in New York State.

*Since the Nursing Scholarship Program started in 2002, 83 scholarship recipients have graduated with associate, bachelor's, or master's degrees in nursing. Another 63 are working toward their degrees.*

### Removing Barriers through a Unique Partnership

In 2010, Saratoga Hospital partnered with Maria College to create an on-site RN to BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) program that removes barriers that can deter nurses from going back to school. By "growing our own," the Hospital increases its complement of baccalaureate-prepared nurses and cultivates a nursing culture that embraces educational advancement. This unique program, carefully designed to be lean and relevant, features the following:

- An expedited admission process so nurses can focus on their coursework and patients
- Classes held at the Hospital so time is spent learning, not traveling
- Courses scheduled consistently each semester, making shift scheduling predictable for both staff and leadership and work-course conflicts a nonissue
- Practical coursework that nurses can immediately apply to their daily work
- A cohort-based program that fosters relationships and supports an integrated approach to care
- Program costs that are 100% covered by the Hospital

*To date, 31 scholarship recipients have graduated from the Maria College program, over 90% of whom remain current employees. A third program cohort began in Fall 2016 with 36 nurses actively enrolled.*

### Magnet® Designation: The Gold Standard for Patient Care

In 2004, Saratoga Hospital became the first in the region to earn Magnet® recognition for nursing excellence, earning re-designation in 2010 and again in 2015. Granted by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, Magnet designation is widely regarded as the gold standard for patient care. Approximately 8% of U.S. hospitals have earned the distinction. The Nursing Scholarship Program allows Saratoga Hospital to remain at the forefront of healthcare and work toward the Magnet and Institute of Medicine (IOM) goal for 80% of RNs to hold at least a BSN by 2020.

<sup>1</sup> Research funded by the European Union and the U.S. National Institute of Nursing Research, National Institutes of Health

**The Saratoga Hospital Golf Invitational Presented by A.O.W. Associates, Inc.**

**Wednesday, September 12, 2018 – Saratoga National Golf Club**

**[www.saratogahospitalgolf.org](http://www.saratogahospitalgolf.org)**

**Meet two nurses who have earned degrees with support from the Nursing Scholarship Program—and whose patients have benefited as a result.**



**Wendy Randall, BSN  
Mental Health Unit (MHU)**

I began working at Saratoga Hospital in 1995 as a brand new RN graduate. I always knew I wanted to go back to school, so when Saratoga Hospital brought Maria College on-site I jumped at the opportunity to be a member of the first cohort. From beginning to end, the entire program was so convenient! I graduated with my Bachelors of Science (BSN) in 2013. The following year, I started a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner program and I plan to graduate with my Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) this May (2018).

Through the Maria program, I gained highly relevant and transferable skills that benefit my work and my patients now, and well into the future. Pursuing my MSN has especially helped me hone my communication skills, meaning I'm better equipped to communicate with my patients and their families, as well as with peers and physicians. I believe my education and experiences are allowing me to practice nursing to the fullest extent.

I couldn't have done any of it without the the support of the Nursing Scholarship Program and Saratoga Hospital. Throughout the entire process everyone – from my peers to my supervisors, from administration to my professors – was so supportive and encouraging. My professors were experienced nurses that were knowledgeable and enthusiastic about helping future nurses to learn and grow. Thanks to the Scholarship Program and donors like you, I've become a better, more professional nurse, helping me elevate the entire profession of nursing.



**Tracy Constantine, BSN, CMSRN  
Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)**

I joined Saratoga Hospital as a Nurse's Aide in 2009 and soon began an RN program with some support from tuition assistance benefits. After graduating with my Associate's Degree in 2012, I began a BSN program but shortly thereafter my life circumstances changed and I was faced with giving up my studies and my dream. Because of the Hospital's Nursing Scholarship Program, however, I was able to continue and this past summer, I graduated with my Bachelor's in Nursing!

Getting my BSN prepared me to be a nurse in ways I couldn't imagine. I was challenged to grow as both a nurse and a person. I now feel an increased sense of confidence, responsibility and humility. Through relevant, hands-on coursework and a focus on nursing administration, I gained a better understanding of the whole healthcare system. I see how my role fits into the bigger picture, which has allowed me to better do my job and treat my patients.

The benefits of Saratoga Hospital's commitment to continuing education and the Nursing Scholarship Program extend far beyond financial support. The experience planted a seed that I am eager to cultivate; I'm excited to continue to grow and learn throughout my career. As a Nursing Scholarship Recipient, I can also lead by example and support other nurses interested in getting their BSNs. Thank you for supporting the Nursing Scholarship Program and investing in nurses like me and the health of our community.

***For more information about donating or becoming a sponsor,  
call Saratoga Hospital Foundation at 518-583-8340.***

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