

Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center Foundation

2026 Nursing Scholarship Awardees



The Nursing Scholarship Program at LHAAMC

The Nursing Scholarship Program was originally established in 1990 in memory of Marlene Reiter, RN, a staff nurse at Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center. (LHAAMC) Over the last 36 years, the LHAAMC Foundation has been able to award more than 400 scholarships to educate, grow, and empower nurses of all backgrounds across all areas of our hospital.

Thanks to the incredible support of our donors, thousands of lives have been impacted across our community, due to the dedication, compassion, and skill of our incredible nursing teams.

This year, we are so proud to award 35 scholarships to the following amazing recipients. Please take a moment to learn more about them.

Brooke Sofield

Member of the LHAAMC team: 7.5 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Registered Nurse/ Pediatric ER

Degree/program working towards: BSN

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

Leadership

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

It will help me pay for more classes and be less stressed financially

Ronnie Kuhn

Member of the LHAAMC team: Almost 5 years in July

Current role at LHAAMC: RN, BSN HVU

Degree/program working towards: MSN-FNP

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

Losing my father to cancer at a young age inspired me to pursue a deeper role in patient care and make a meaningful impact during vulnerable moments. Through my nursing experience, I've also seen how gaps in education and follow-up can lead to preventable complications. Becoming an MSN-FNP will allow me to provide holistic care, improve access, and empower patients to better manage their health.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This nursing scholarship will ease my financial burden, allowing me to focus more fully on my education and clinical training as I pursue my MSN-FNP. It will support my long-term career goals by helping me advance into a provider role where I can improve access to care and promote better health outcomes for my patients.

Caitlin Dropik

Member of the LHAAMC team: 7.5 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Clinical Supervisor, Medical Surgical Unit

Degree/program working towards: Family Nurse Practitioner

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

I want to help patients in a primary care setting.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This will help me to pay for my classes and not have to "pinch pennies" so much.

Sarah Morgan

Member of the LHAAMC team: 6 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Clinical Supervisor, ACE Unit

Degree/program working towards: BSN

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

As a magnet organization, Luminis requires at least a BSN degree. I love the organization and everything that it does for its employees. I want stay with Luminis until retirement.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This scholarship is immensely helpful to me. It's challenging to work while going to college and also care for your family. My husband and I work tirelessly to provide for our family but as many of us are feeling, the cost of living is high. Working more to offset this is simply not an option while I am working on my degree. This scholarship will allow me funding to pay for childcare so that I can focus on my schooling.

Meredith Cornett

Member of the LHAAMC team: 4.5 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Senior Nursing Director, Surgical Services

Degree/program working towards: DNP

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

Christine Frost when she attained her DNP and what an accomplishment, she made to the profession of Nursing and her example to continue her education in her current role.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This will help relieve the financial burden on my family to support me finishing my degree. It means more than money it means support and encouragement in me and my degree goals. Furthermore, it means someone believes in me and that is motivation to continue advancing my education. THANK YOU!

Makayla Cager

Member of the LHAAMC team: 6 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Registered Medical Assistant at the Wound Center

Degree/program working towards: DNP

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

I have always wanted to be a Nurse since I was a child; I went into medical assisting after high school to ensure my love for medicine and it has just been solidified since.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This Scholarship will allow me to be less stressed about finances in my life for me and my 3-year-old daughter (food, gas, bills). It has been hard being in school and having to cut back my hours at work has taken 150-200 per paycheck away and on top of that I have had to use all of PTO and PL leaving me with no wiggle room there which has caused even more stress recently. Having a lower stress level allows me to focus more on my education so that I can be the best nurse I have always wanted to be.

Jessica Walker

Member of the LHAAMC team: 15 years

Current role at LHAAMC: RN PACU

Degree/program working towards: Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

My passion for helping others on their healthcare journey.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

It will help cover costs of classes and materials.

Gillian Eshelman

Member of the LHAAMC team: 3 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Student Nurse PCT, ACE unit

Degree/program working towards: BSN, RN

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

I have always known I wanted to pursue a career in healthcare. I had the opportunity to complete a CNA program during my senior year of high school. Because of that program, I fell in love with nursing and began my BSN education at Longwood University in Virginia. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I had to withdraw from the program during my sophomore year in 2021 and move back to Maryland. Due to the prerequisite requirement differences between the states, it was not until fall of 2024 that I was able to begin my BSN program at the University of Maryland School of Nursing. Since then, I have worked every day to excel in my academic studies. I am extremely excited and grateful to be graduating on May 12th, and beginning my RN journey on the ACE unit, surrounded by amazing coworkers who will support me along the way.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

I am extremely grateful for this nursing scholarship. It affects my life and career not only financially but also mentally by knowing that there are even generous strangers who are willing to support me on my nursing journey. I would not have made it through successfully without the amount of family and friends supporting me. Thank you for being a part of my support system.

Kara Coullard

Member of the LHAAMC team: 10 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Staff Nurse on ICU/CVICU Unit and Resource Nurse - Acute Care Pavillion

Degree/program working towards: Master's in Nursing toward license as PMHNP (Psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner)

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

My experience with critical care patients/families highlighted the need for mental health practitioners. Post-ICU syndrome is a common, devastating sequela from some inpatient hospital stays. Adjusting to functional changes after discharge is a known stress for the entire family. A psych NP is perfectly positioned to address the risks for post-discharge decline. Adding psych NPs interventions to the acute healthcare team enhances our quest for complete and functional recovery.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

At age 52, my quest is to finish my advanced degree/licensure with plenty of time to remain active in the nursing profession. This financial assistance allows me to enroll in full-time graduate school + work full time in current role. I'll achieve my NP before age 55:). Without this financial assistance, I would only be able to take one class at a time and would be 60 years old before graduation.

Carly Disque

Member of the LHAAMC team: 18 years

Current role at LHAAMC: PACU Staff Nurse

Degree/program working towards: MSN, FNP

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

Over the past fifteen years as a nurse, I have developed a deep commitment to advancing my career by enrolling in a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program and becoming a family nurse practitioner. My dedication to expanding my clinical expertise, my passion for patient care, and my drive for personal growth motivate me to pursue this next step. Experiencing a patient's gratitude and renewed dedication to their health strengthened my determination to focus on preventive care—where early intervention can change lives. I am grateful for the range of experience that has enriched my clinical skills and reinforced my devotion to delivering exceptional care to every patient I serve.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

I am honored to be considered for this scholarship, as it will have a transformative impact on my ability to complete the Family Nurse Practitioner program. With this support, I can alleviate the financial pressures of tuition and part-time employment, allowing me to devote my energy and attention to my education and clinical training. This opportunity will empower me to grow into the skilled, compassionate healthcare provider my community deserves.

Melita Jones

Member of the LHAAMC team: 26 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Clinical Director - Observation Unit, Vascular Access Team, Special Pathogens Unit

Degree/program working towards: Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

My decision to pursue a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree was initially driven by a desire for personal growth, but it has become a highly intentional step that aligns closely with my current leadership responsibilities and long-term career goals. I am motivated by a strong commitment to improving patient outcomes and strengthening healthcare systems through evidence-based practice and effective leadership. Additionally, I aspire to serve as a positive role model for my family and my community, demonstrating the value of lifelong learning, professional advancement, and dedication to the nursing profession.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This nursing scholarship will have a meaningful impact on both my personal and professional journey. It will provide financial support that allows me to focus more fully on my studies and leadership development without the added burden of financial strain. Professionally, it will enhance my ability to lead effectively, implement high-quality, patient-centered care initiatives, and contribute to system-level improvements in healthcare. This opportunity will further empower me to make lasting contributions to the nursing profession while continuing to grow as a leader, mentor, and advocate for excellence in patient care.

Juana Mancía

Member of the LHAAMC team: 14 years

Current role at LHAAMC: ER technician/ PCS/Pediatrics Unit

Degree/program working towards: Associate's in Nursing

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

I chose nursing because I want to make a meaningful difference in people's lives during their most vulnerable moments. I've been inspired by how nurses provide not only skilled medical care, but also comfort, advocacy, and emotional support to patients and their families. Nursing stood out to me as a career that combines compassion, critical thinking, and hands-on care, while also offering the opportunity to keep learning and grow in different specialties.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This nursing scholarship will have a major impact on my life and career by reducing the financial stress of my education, allowing me to fully focus on my studies and clinical training. It will help me gain the knowledge and hands-on experience I need to become a confident and skilled nurse. Ultimately, it brings me closer to achieving my goal of providing compassionate care and making a meaningful difference in patients' lives.

Shantice Keene

Member of the LHAAMC team: 11 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Licensed Practical Nurse

Degree/program working towards: BSN RN

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

Working toward becoming an LPN to BSN RN has been inspired by both my passion for patient care and my desire to grow professionally in the healthcare field. As an LPN, I have gained valuable hands-on experience and developed strong relationships with patients, which has shown me how meaningful nursing can be. However, I've also recognized the limitations of my current role and the opportunities that come with advancing my education. Pursuing a BSN will allow me to expand my knowledge, take on greater responsibilities, and provide a higher level of care. I am especially motivated by the chance to be more involved in-patient assessment, care planning, and leadership within a healthcare team. Additionally, earning my BSN will open doors for career advancement, including opportunities in specialized nursing areas and leadership roles.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

Receiving this nursing scholarship will have a significant impact on both my life and my career. Financially, it will reduce the burden of tuition and related expenses, allowing me to focus more on my education rather than worrying about how to pay for it. This support will give me the opportunity to dedicate more time to studying, clinical practice, and developing the skills necessary to succeed as a BSN-prepared nurse. In my career, this scholarship will help me continue my journey from LPN to RN with a stronger foundation and fewer obstacles. It will bring me one step closer to achieving my goal of providing a higher level of patient care, taking on more responsibilities, and potentially moving into leadership or specialized roles in the future. With a BSN, I will be better equipped to make informed decisions, advocate for patients, and contribute meaningfully to the healthcare team.



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Lilia Olivia

Member of the LHAAMC team: 24 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Registered Nurse

Degree/program working towards: MSN Healthcare Quality and Patient Safety

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

My decision to pursue a Master of Science in Nursing with a focus on Healthcare Quality and Safety comes from both my professional experiences and my personal commitment to patient care. Throughout my time in healthcare, I have seen how the quality of care and attention to safety directly impact patient outcomes. Those experiences shaped my perspective and made me more aware of the gaps that can exist in healthcare systems. I have always felt most fulfilled when I know that the care delivered is not only compassionate but also safe, consistent, and evidence based. That sense of responsibility to ensure patients receive the highest standard of care, is what drives me. I am particularly enthusiastic about advocating for systems and practices that reduce errors, improve communication, and create safer environments for both patients and healthcare providers.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This nursing scholarship will have a major impact on my life and career by reducing the financial stress of my education, allowing me to fully focus on my studies and clinical training. It will help me gain the knowledge and hands-on experience I need to become a confident and skilled nurse. Ultimately, it brings me closer to achieving my goal of providing compassionate care and making a meaningful difference in patients' lives.

Jordan Feldmann

Member of the LHAAMC team: 1.5 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Orthopedic MA, LH orthopedics

Degree/program working towards: ADN

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

I chose nursing because I genuinely enjoy helping people, especially during difficult times. Through my clinical experiences, I've seen the impact nurses have on patients and families, which motivates me to keep going. I want a career where I can make a real difference every day.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This scholarship will take some financial pressure off me so I can focus more on school and clinicals. It will help me stay on track to becoming a nurse without worrying as much about money. It also motivates me to keep working hard and reach my goal of becoming a nurse and helping people every day.

LaToya Roland

Member of the LHAAMC team: 3 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Orthopedic Registered Nurse /Outpatient Infusion Therapy

Degree/program working towards: Master's of Science / Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

Throughout the years I realized Mental Health is associated in every aspect of life. I plan to selflessly help others navigate it.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

The cost of a master's degree is much more than I signed up for, this scholarship will help me financially work towards finishing this degree without having to take a semester off.

Megan Turk

Member of the LHAAMC team: 2.5 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Orthopedic Staff Nurse, Peds ED

Degree/program working towards: MSN in Education

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

Pursuing a career in Nursing Education

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

It will provide opportunities to advance my career towards teaching new and upcoming nursing.

Megan Turk

Member of the LHAAMC team: 2.5 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Orthopedic Staff Nurse, Peds ED

Degree/program working towards: MSN in Education

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

Pursuing a career in Nursing Education

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

It will provide opportunities to advance my career towards teaching new and upcoming nursing.

Jessica Wigginton

Member of the LHAAMC team: 4 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Orthopedic CAN/Pathways

Degree/program working towards: RN

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

Being a mom has inspired me to do better for my kids and myself. Nursing has always been a goal for me, i just love learning new things everyday and helping others in the process.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This scholarship will help me financially with child care for my youngest who will be born this June so i can continue to stay in the nursing program and work towards getting my degree.

Oben Eyonganyo

Member of the LHAAMC team: 2 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Patient Safety Attendant/Central Staffing Unit.

Degree/program working towards: This Nursing Scholarship will help me to complete my Associate of Nursing degree and help work towards my BSN.

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

What inspired me to work toward this degree is my desire to be there for people when they need it most. I want to have the skills and knowledge to support individuals during their toughest times and make a meaningful difference.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This scholarship will help me financially with childcare for my youngest who will be born this June so i can continue to stay in the nursing program and work towards getting my degree.

Meka Ferdinand

Member of the LHAAMC team: 4 years

Current role at LHAAMC: RN Endoscopy Unit

Degree/program working towards: Completing my BSN and starting my MSN

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification? It was now or never. I've always wanted to finish what I started and my supervisor Sarah Brace has been the best in encouraging me to do so.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

I have 3 children, two are in college now. I am paying more out of pocket and honestly couldn't afford sending myself back but this scholarship opportunity will help take that burden away. Thank you so much for your generosity!

Vincent Rea

Member of the LHAAMC team: 5 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Unit Staff Nurse Emergency Department

Degree/program working towards: MSN PMHNP

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

The reward of overcoming the unique challenges and satisfaction of witnessing and being a part of the unique rewards associated with patients overcoming mental health disorders.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This scholarship will provide me with the much needed financial assistance to strive for and achieve my career goals, while allowing me to maintain my focus on my family, career, and focus on my community.

Kelly Larrimore

Member of the LHAAMC team: 7 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Nursing Operations Manager

Degree/program working towards: MSN in Nursing Leadership

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

I decided to pursue my MSN in Nursing Leadership to continue growing within my organization and expand my ability to positively impact both patients and staff.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This scholarship will help to ease the financial stress of continuing my education while also supporting my family. It will give me the skills and knowledge needed to be a great leader.

Oluwatoyin Falana

Member of the LHAAMC team: 2 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Registered Nurse

Degree/program working towards: PMHNP

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

Because I have a passion for wholesome care and integrative medicine. I am currently an AGPCNP and excited to expand to PMHNP.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

It will help me expanding my knowledge to care for my patients and grow in my profession.

Katherine Trulove

Member of the LHAAMC team: 1.5 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Registered Nurse

Degree/program working towards: No, will be taking CCRN this year

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

I have always enjoyed learning and advancing my knowledge. I feel that becoming an NP will open more opportunities to learn and still leave a lasting impact on my patients.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

I will be able to continue working full time while completing my degree. I will be able to focus on my courses rather than having to take out loans to pay for college or picking up OT.

John E. Okpebho

Member of the LHAAMC team: 4 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Registered Nurse

Degree/program working towards: Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP).

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

My initial inspiration stemmed from observing patients, especially in 4Med and recognizing their significant need for specialized mental health support. I am inspired by the prospect of empowering individuals to reclaim their lives, fostering resilience, and promoting mental wellness across diverse populations.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This nursing scholarship will significantly alleviate the financial pressure I am presently experiencing. This nursing scholarship is far more than a financial award; it is a spark for my personal and professional transformation into a competent and compassionate PMHNP.

Nicole Gibbs

Member of the LHAAMC team: 4 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Registered Nurse; NCU

Degree/program working towards: BSN

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

To advance my career and open the door for other roles and opportunities in this organization. I want to be able to provide the best care to my patients so I want to receive more training on leadership roles, critical thinking, and how to further apply evidence-based practices.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

I greatly appreciate this nursing scholarship. This scholarship will allow me to focus on school and my job without the burden of financial pressures. It will allow me to advance my career so that I can continue to develop into a well-rounded nurse who provides the best possible care for her patients.

Grace Lindemann

Member of the LHAAMC team: 5 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Patient Care Technician FLEX

Degree/program working towards: BSN

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

I was inspired to pursue a BSN because I want to provide compassionate, evidence-based care while making a meaningful impact on patients' lives. Seeing the difference skilled nurses make during critical moments during time spent at work motivated me to develop the knowledge and clinical skills needed to advocate for patients and support their recovery.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This nursing scholarship will reduce my financial stress, allowing me to focus more fully on my studies and clinical training. It will help me complete my BSN on time and with less debt, giving me greater flexibility to pursue career opportunities in patient care. Ultimately, it will support my goal of becoming a skilled, compassionate nurse who can make a meaningful difference in my community.



Luminis HealthSM

Sarah Gun

Member of the LHAAMC team: 6 years

Current role at LHAAMC: RN GSU

Degree/program working towards: UMSON's Adult-Gerontology Primary Care DNP

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

My experience as a registered nurse inspired me to pursue a DNP in Adult-Gerontology Primary Care after seeing how many adults and older adults struggle to access consistent, preventive healthcare. I want to expand my role so I can provide comprehensive care, promote healthy aging, and build lasting relationships with patients. This degree will allow me to make a greater impact through advanced clinical practice, leadership, and evidence-based care.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This scholarship will let me focus on my academics as it will greatly relieve my financial burden.

Annie Vollmerhausen

Member of the LHAAMC team: 4 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Staff RN/Oncology Unit

Degree/program working towards: MSN

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

I chose to pursue my MSN to expand my knowledge and further my career.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

This scholarship will help me to focus on school and reach my goals, furthering my nursing career.

Elizabeth “Betsy” Smith

Member of the LHAAMC team: 13 years

Current role at LHAAMC: Neuro Care Clinical Supervisor

Degree/program working towards: Masters - Family Nurse Practitioner

What inspired you to work towards this degree or certification?

I recently went through a divorce and am now raising two young children on my own. In the current economic climate, I am finding it challenging to provide for them at the level I aspire to. My goal is to create a stable and safe environment where my children can thrive, one that includes opportunities to participate in sports, enjoy meaningful experiences, and grow socially and emotionally. I also want to be financially prepared for unexpected needs. For example, my son was recently diagnosed with dyslexia, and I want to ensure I can provide him with the tutoring and support he needs to succeed.

How will this nursing scholarship affect your life and career?

It will relieve some of the financial burden of going to school. I am working hard to graduate without having to take out a loan. This way I can focus my new FNP income to providing a stable and safe environment for my children.

**Thank you for your support of
the Nursing Scholarship
Program at LHAAMC!**