

Nursing Education and Leadership Fund Impact Report



Commitment to nursing education

Theresa Ball, RN, BSN, Certified Health Coach, MSN Candidate, has been with Catholic Health for the past 12 years. She was first hired at Our Lady of Consolation, transitioned to St. Charles Hospital and eventually came to Good Samaritan University Hospital, where she currently works in cardiology. She is also pursuing a Master’s degree in leadership and management in nursing, thanks to Good Samaritan University Hospital’s Nursing Education and Leadership Fund.

About to enter its third year of funding, the Nursing Education and Leadership Fund has provided over half a million dollars in scholarships for training, mentoring and formal education for all levels of nursing staff. Made possible by generous donors, the program has helped nearly 60 nurses and aspiring nurses to fulfill their educational ambitions and goals.

Ball first received a scholarship to become a certified health coach, and continued investing in her education by enrolling in a Master’s degree program. She says, “This degree represents a brighter and more fulfilling future for me and my family. The generous scholarship I received empowered me to achieve my educational goals, equipping me with the knowledge and skills to make a meaningful impact. My vision is to continue serving as an advocate for my colleagues, offering holistic support and creating a culture of resilience and well-being within the health care profession.”

Melissa Leon, RN, MSN, achieved her Master’s degree at Molloy University, with help from the Nursing Education and Leadership Fund. She was a Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) nurse at Good Samaritan University Hospital. After graduation, she advanced to become a psychiatric nurse practitioner at Mercy Hospital. Says Leon, “I have been with Catholic Health since 2018, from unit clerk, to nurse to now nurse practitioner—and I absolutely had to continue working for the same health system that taught and helped me so much.” Today, she is further investing in her career and education as she prepares to enroll in Molloy University’s Post-Master’s Certificate Program to become an adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioner. She explains, “With this certification, I will be dual-certified in both psychiatry and acute care, allowing me to provide comprehensive treatment to patients across their full spectrum of needs.” And because of the encouragement she received during the program, she even has her sights set on a doctoral degree in the future.



Theresa Ball, RN, BSN, Certified Health Coach, MSN Candidate



Melissa Leon, RN, MSN

Kerry Dillon, NA, is currently pursuing her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Adelphi University after successfully graduating from Suffolk County Community College with her Associate’s degree—all thanks to the Nursing Education and Leadership Fund. She works as a nursing assistant in the MICU at Good Samaritan University Hospital and plans to stay in the same department after graduation—this time as a nurse. Says Dillon, “The scholarship helped tremendously with my academic journey. It helped me pay my tuition and fees, as well as purchase all the necessary equipment and tools required to be a student nurse.”



Kerry Dillon, NA

These nurses, and more, find themselves grateful for the investment in their education and careers by Good Samaritan, and the donors who partnered with the hospital to make it happen. Senior Vice President & Chief Nursing Officer Susan Knoepffler says that Good Samaritan is committed to cultivating, retaining and strengthening its nursing workforce. She explains, “The quality of nursing care is what ensures that our Catholic Health mission is fulfilled. We are privileged to serve the health care needs of our community. And we’re very thankful to the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, the Helen Hoffritz Charitable Trust, the Guilds of Good Samaritan University Hospital and many others who generously provided the funding for this innovative new scholarship program.”



Investing in nurse education

We recognize the following nurses who are earning advanced degrees thanks to the Nursing Education and Leadership Fund.

Name, Position, Department	School	Degree
Rachel Pyne, Surgical Tech, OR	Suffolk County Community College	Associate's Degree
Austyn Nolen, Medical Assistant, Physician Partners	Suffolk County Community College/ Stony Brook University	Associate's Degree
Lisa Fazio, Unit Clerk, OR	Suffolk County Community College	Associate's Degree
Nicole Abbott, Nursing Assistant, MICU	Suffolk County Community College	Associate's Degree
Blessing Enahoro, Nursing Assistant, ICU	Suffolk County Community College	Associate's Degree
Jackelin Umana, Nursing Assistant, 2 Main - Med Surg	Suffolk County Community College	Associate's Degree
Richerik Fu, Nursing Assistant, 3 Main	Suffolk County Community College	Associate's Degree
Kelly Weingaertner, Unit Clerk, OR	Nassau Community College/ Empire State University	Associate's Degree
Logan Powers, Unit Clerk, Labor & Delivery	Suffolk County Community College	Associate's Degree
Frank Abruzese, Periop Assistant, OR	Suffolk County Community College	Associate's Degree
Peter DiLauro, LPN, C Unit - MedSurg	Excelsior University	Associate's Degree
Rebecca Beatty, Order Organizer, Imaging Services	Molloy University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Deidre Verbeeck, Assistant Nurse Manager, OR	Chamberlain University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Marionna Selvaggio, Nursing Assistant, 3 South	Long Island University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Lisette Angamarca, Surgical Tech, OR	Long Island University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Ervin Alvarez, LPN, C Unit - Med Surg	Excelsior University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Kerry Dillon, Nursing Assistant, MICU	Adelphi University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Elizabeth Conway Benedetto, RN, CT-ICU	Chamberlain University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Diamond Wilson, Nursing Assistant*, Telemetry	Helene Fuld College	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Paige Morahan, LPN, Med Surg	Molloy University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Elaina Lerikos, Periop Assistant, OR	Suffolk County Community College	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Eric Jennings, Periop Assistant, OR	Long Island University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Ivan Gonzalez, Transporter	Molloy University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Antonio Lazo Arguetu, Nursing Assistant, Good Samaritan Nursing & Rehabilitation	Suffolk County Community College	Bachelor of Science in Nursing

* Transferred to a different Catholic Health entity

Name, Position, Department	School	Degree
Kristen Lodato, Assistant Nurse Manager, PACU	Chamberlain University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Heather Kozlowski, Assistant Nurse Manager, OR	Grand Canyon University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Michelle Duffy, RN, C Unit - Med Surg	Chamberlain University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Shelly-Ann McKenzie-Gentles, RN, 2 Main - Med Surg	Western Governors University	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Christopher Otto, Nurse Manager, SICU	Quinnipiac University	Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)
Michelle Spezia, Assistant Nurse Manager, Cardiology	Western Governors University	Master of Science in Nursing
Danielle Weeks, Assistant Nurse Manager, PACU	Empire State University	Master of Science in Nursing
Theresa Ball, RN, Cath Lab	Western Governors University	Master of Science in Nursing
Luisa Baldi, RN, ED	St. John Fisher University	Master of Science in Nursing
Tamara Allen, RN, OR	Grand Canyon University	Master of Science in Nursing
Siana Barclay, RN, ASU	Adelphi University	Master of Science in Nursing
Gabrielle Schwartz, RN, D Unit - Med Surg	St. Joseph's University	Master of Science in Nursing
Dennys Torres, RN, MICU	Stony Brook University	Master of Science in Nursing
Desmond Scott, RN, MICU	Adelphi University	Master of Science in Nursing
Stephanie Keller, Assistant Nurse Manager, 2 Main - Med Surg	Molloy University	Master of Science in Nursing
Jesse Hassett, RN, MICU	Stony Brook University	Master of Science in Nursing
Paul Giunta, RN, B Unit - Med Surg	Stony Brook University	Master of Science in Nursing
Lauren Williams, RN, MICU	Molloy University	Master of Science in Nursing
Allison Regan, NP, Internal Medicine	Molloy University	Master of Science in Nursing
Kelsie Moinzadeh, RN, Cardiology	Utica University	Master of Science in Nursing
Melissa Schnepf, RN, PACU	Stony Brook University	Master of Science in Nursing
Melissa Leon, RN, MICU	Molloy University	Master of Science in Nursing
Samantha Walsh, Assistant Nurse Manager, 2 Main - Med Surg	Stony Brook University	Master of Science in Nursing
Melissa Luniewski, Nurse Educator, PACU	Molloy University	Master of Science in Nursing
Rachel Mercorella, RN, ED	Stony Brook University	Master of Science in Nursing
Katie O'Connor, RN, MICU	Molloy University	Master of Science in Nursing
Jessica Twohig, RN, MICU	University of Phoenix	Master of Science in Nursing
Dianna Sullivan, RN, 2 Main - Med Surg	Molloy University	Master of Science in Nursing
Shelly Matson, RN, 2 Main - Med Surg	Molloy University	Master of Science in Nursing
Rachel Montwill, RN, Quality Nursing Education	University of Mary	Master of Science in Nursing

Award-winning care and nursing excellence

Good Samaritan University Hospital’s nurses continue to shine in their day-to-day work as they care for patients as if they were family. At the same time, these nurses are being recognized nationally for the care they deliver.

As we continue to support our nurses through the Nursing Education and Leadership Fund, Good Samaritan’s future is bright for excellent, compassionate nursing. When we invest in great nursing, we are investing in the caring hands that bring healing and comfort to those in need.

Our Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) and Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit/Intermediate Care Unit (CTICU/IMCU) have once again earned silver-level

Beacon Awards for Excellence from The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) to recognize their excellent and compassionate care. The Beacon Award for Excellence recognizes units that distinguish themselves by providing high-quality patient care in a healthy work environment. According to Good Samaritan University Hospital President Justin Lundbye, MD, “These awards are a reflection of our MICU and CTICU/IMCU teams’ consistent and systematic approach to providing rigorously researched, evidence-based care to both optimize patient outcomes and improve the work environment. In earning these awards, these units serve as international examples of excellence in clinical care and workforce satisfaction.”

Two nurses, Beth Bents, Nurse Educator, and Brianna Quinn, on 3 Main, received the 2024 DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses, and the Surgical Intensive Care Unit (SICU) received the DAISY Team Award. The DAISY Award is a special honor that celebrates the extraordinary compassionate and skillful care given by nurses every day. DAISY Award honorees personify Good Samaritan’s remarkable patient experience, consistently demonstrating excellence through clinical expertise and extraordinary compassionate care.

Finally, Good Samaritan is the only hospital on the South Shore of Suffolk County to earn the most coveted and prestigious honor hospital nurses can achieve—Magnet® recognition for excellence in nursing care. The Magnet® program was created and is administered by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. It recognizes health care organizations that demonstrate excellence in nursing philosophy and practice, adhere to national standards for improving patient care, maintain an active research program and display leadership and sensitivity to cultural and ethnic diversity. Less than 10% of hospitals in the U.S. have earned the Magnet® designation.

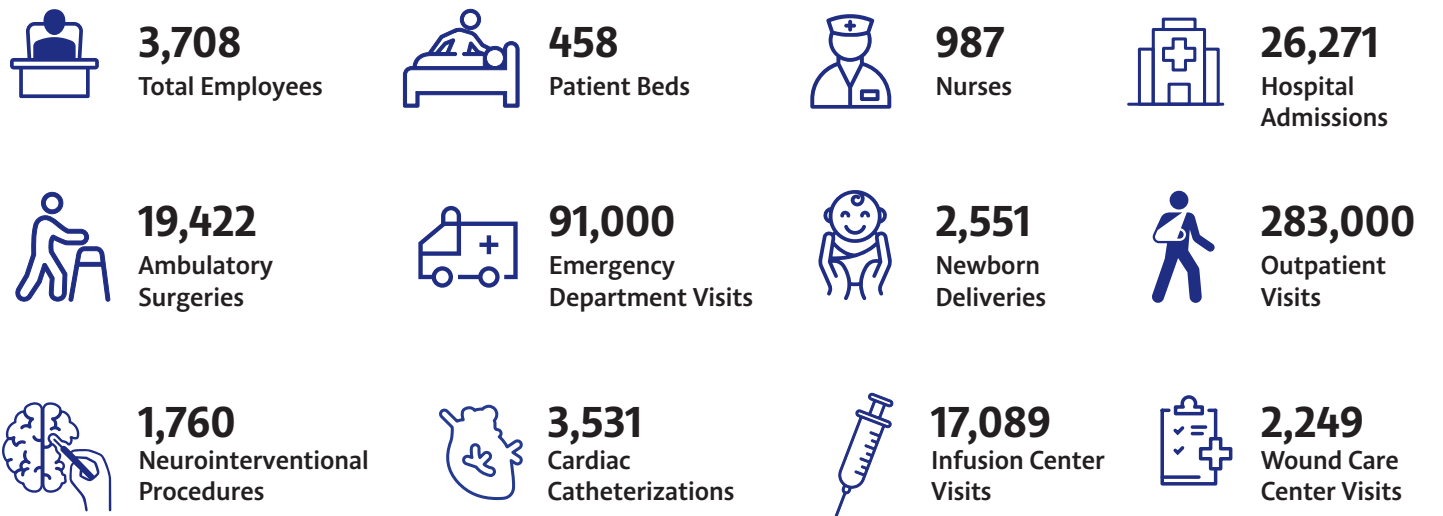
For patients and their families, these awards signify exceptional care through improved outcomes and greater overall satisfaction. For nurses, these



international recognitions mean a positive and supportive work environment with greater collaboration between colleagues and leaders. At Good Samaritan, we are proud to support our nurses as they strive for excellence in care, every patient, every time.



Good Samaritan University Hospital by the numbers



Thank you!

Because of donors like you, the Nursing Education and Leadership Fund is helping our nurses and aspiring nurses fulfill their educational ambitions and goals. Thank you for being a partner in our important work to care for the community.