

# SIUE School of Nursing Doubles Scholarship Support, Celebrates Impact

by Megan Wieser  
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Nursing (SON) has doubled the number of awards and associated monetary total aimed at supporting student success through generous annual and endowed scholarships.



During its Scholarship and Awards Ceremony held Monday, April 11, SON administrators, faculty, staff, students and donors gathered to celebrate the distribution of 60 awards valued at more than \$60,000.

“It is my absolute delight to welcome everyone to this in-person gathering,” shared Senior Director of Development Patti McDonald. “This has been an extremely challenging last couple of years for us all, personally and professionally. But, the response of nurses, nurse educators and our students to these difficult and ever-changing

circumstances has been nothing short of heroic. The world has truly discovered the value of nurses and their significant impact on quality of life and well-being.”



“On behalf of the School of Nursing, I extend my sincere gratitude to our generous donors for their unwavering commitment to our students’ success and for the remarkable investments they have made not only in the lives of our scholarship recipients, but also in the nursing profession,” added Interim Dean Mark Luer, PharmD.

Luer went on to share SON highlights, including the hiring of Judy Liesveld, PhD, RN, PPCNP-BC, CNE, FAAN, who will assume the role of dean in July 2022. He also offered updates on the planning phase of the new Health Sciences Building which will expand the School’s academic footprint and inspire curricula innovation.

During the ceremony, the SON celebrated having met the \$200,000 goal for the endowed Dr. Jacquelyn M. Clement Scholarship in Nursing presented to students pursuing a master’s in nurse anesthesia (CRNA), as well as the inaugural Sandra and Peter Spilotro Scholarship award, and the launch of a new scholarship in honor of former SON Dean Laura Bernaix, PhD, RN.



Three SON student speakers, Claire Choi, Rachel Wall, and Cassie Starrett, shared why and how nursing became their calling and underscored how donors' generous support is fostering their growth as developing and advanced nurses.

"Whatever impact I could theoretically have would not be possible if it weren't for the people in this room, the donors who have generously decided that these nurses deserve a chance to make a difference," said Wall, a senior in the Accelerated RN to BS program. "Nursing is a privilege. We look at people who are going through difficult health journeys, and as nurses, we have the opportunity to make a significant difference in their lives. To prepare for that worthy work, I knew SIUE's School of Nursing would provide an excellent education with high-caliber faculty, hardworking staff and motivated fellow students."

"We are grateful for our contributors' partnership with the School of Nursing," concluded McDonald. "We extend our appreciation for your thoughtful support of our most talented and deserving nursing students. You are making a direct and meaningful difference in their nursing education and careers."