

SIUE School of Nursing Hosts 16th Annual Scholarship and Awards Luncheon

by Kalli Collins
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EDWARDSVILLE – Earlier this month, the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Nursing (SON) hosted its 16th Annual Scholarship and Awards Ceremony. Nearly 100 guests gathered for the celebration, including scholarship donors and student recipients, along with SON administrators, faculty and staff. This time-honored tradition is held to recognize the shared aspirations and achievements of scholarship sponsors and recipients.

“On behalf of the entire SIUE School of Nursing Community, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 16th Annual Scholarship and Awards Ceremony,” said Patti McDonald, senior director of development, during the opening remarks. “We are so glad you are here and thank everyone for being part of and continuing this time-honored tradition for the SIUE School of Nursing. You have formed a powerful partnership that will advance the future of nursing through our region, state and world in the years to come.”

“We were thrilled to award 60 scholarships this year, equaling \$62,000,” said Judy Liesveld, PhD, RN, PPCNP-BC, CNE, FAAN, dean of the SON. “The generosity of our donors is inspiring, and the scholarship luncheon offered a heartwarming opportunity for our scholarship recipients to meet the donors. We have many exciting programs and initiatives occurring at the SON, including the opportunity to fundraise for our new building with scheduled completion in the summer of 2025. We are grateful to our donors for their unparalleled support of our students and the SON.”

Two students enrolled in the traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program shared touching stories about their background and why they decided to pursue a career in nursing. They also expressed their sincere gratitude to their scholarship donors and all scholarship donors for their selfless support of their education and future careers.

While their stories are different, they shared great passion for nursing at the bedside and deep gratitude for the selfless support of the donors who are supporting their future dreams and careers.

“I am extremely grateful to have been selected for a scholarship,” said Marta Korte, traditional BSN student and recipient of the Excellence in Nursing Scholarship. “I believe that my patients, families and coworkers deserve the best and I hope that excellence is instilled in all our students.”

“My vision for my nursing career is to be exceptional in any and everything I do,” added Jaala Taay, traditional BSN student and recipient of the SON Faculty Scholarship. “I would like to thank all donors for their continued support and contribution to help us all in our nursing careers.”

Maria Ballard, president of the SIUE School of Nursing Alumni Advisory Board, shared remarks on the mission and work of the Board and congratulated scholarship sponsors and recipients.

“As alumni and members of the board, it is our responsibility to be good stewards towards the School and to continue the legacy of the School of Nursing, and help it advance purposefully into the future,” said Ballard. “On behalf of SON alumni and the

Alumni Advisory Board, I would like to thank scholarship donors for making today's scholarship ceremony possible. Congratulations to all of the scholarship recipients. Your hard work and dedication to your education and the nursing profession is evident, and the alumni board could not be prouder of you."

The [School of Nursing's](#) programs are committed to creating excellence in nursing leadership through innovative teaching, evidence-based practice, quality research, patient advocacy and community service. Enrolling more than 1,700 students in its baccalaureate, master's and doctoral programs, the School develops leaders in pursuit of shaping the nursing profession and impacting the health care environment. SIUE's undergraduate nursing programs on the Edwardsville campus help to solve the region's shortage of baccalaureate-prepared nurses and enhance the quality of nursing practice within all patient service venues. The School's graduate programs prepare nurses for advanced roles in clinical practice, administration and education.