



Illinois Nursing Workforce Center, June 4, 2024, Appendix A FY24 Nurse Educator Fellow Individual Abstracts

The Illinois Nursing Workforce Center and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) collaborated once again this year for recognizing the recipients of the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowships. This year's class of 76 honorees represent Nursing education programs at 42 different institutions of higher education with accredited nursing programs leading to initial licensure as a Registered Nurse. These nursing programs are at public community colleges and universities, and non-profit and for-profit independent colleges and universities throughout the state of Illinois.

The Nurse Educator Fellowship program is designed to retain well-qualified nursing faculty in Illinois with a salary supplement to be used for the faculty member's professional development, scholarship or other endeavors as nurse educators to improve the preparation of future nurses. Fellows are selected through a competitive process and two rounds of applications were accepted in fiscal year 2024 to allow greater access to the Fellowship program. From both rounds of awarding fellowships, there was some attrition due to changes in applicants' employment and one sponsoring private university for two Fellows officially closed in the spring semester. Each Fellow received a \$10,000 salary supplement for a grand total of \$760,00 awarded in fellowships. The number of fellowships awarded nearly doubled from the previous fiscal year due to an increase in funds in Governor JB Pritzker's fiscal year 2024 budget supported by the Illinois General Assembly.

The Illinois Nursing Workforce Center Advisory Board (INWC) and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) celebrated the recognition of the 76 IBHE Nurse Educator Fellows at three virtual lunch-and-learn events this summer. The showcasing of the 2024 Nurse Educator Fellows began during the Illinois Nursing Workforce Center's Advisory Board meeting on June 4th, 2024. Additional recognition events were June 12th and July 11th, 2024. Across the three recognition events, 14 team presentations were given by Fellows that highlighted how they are using the fellowship funds for professional development and to enhance nursing education. These team presentations were organized by common experiences such as simulation training; leadership development; diversity, equity and inclusion training; advanced degree programs and certifications; new curriculum, teaching, and research; and professional conferences. In addition to the team presentations, each Fellow is also required to submit a 200 to 250-word abstract describing the fellowship experience.

Nurse Educator Fellow

Susan Cimino MSN-Ed, RN

Affiliation

Ambria College of Nursing

Thank you for selecting me as a recipient of the 2024 IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship award. Working as a nursing educator over the last three years, I have found a passion for instilling love and excitement for nursing in my students. With high standards and expectations, I expect students to

graduate as nurses who will provide optimal care for their patients and make a difference in the overall environment of healthcare.

Receiving this unexpected grant money has allowed me to reignite my passion for bedside nursing and nursing education. I have used the funds to participate in a prep course for the CCRN and the CNE, purchase multiple study materials, and register for both certification exams (CCRN in August, CNE in November). Continuing my own education and growing within my careers sets an example for my students; we tell them nursing is about lifelong learning, now I can show them.

I have invested grant money into research, designing a study on reducing exam anxiety in students which will run during our fall semester. I hope the findings will allow me to better address the needs of the students and make test taking easier. I also purchased supplies and programs to enhance my flipped classroom and further engage my students.

I have used money to continue my memberships in several professional nursing affiliates, NLN, AACN, and the ANA. This allows me to continue to have a voice for change within my occupation.

Carolyn Mistal MSN, RN, CCRN-K

Ambria College of Nursing

I am honored to be a recipient of the Nurse Educator Fellowship Program.

I have been a nurse for eight years and a nurse educator for 2.5 years. Just like many educators I feel passionate about the profession of nursing and work far beyond my compensated hours to ensure my lessons are thought-provoking and memorable. I have found that sometimes the actuality of providing the best education is costly and sometimes out of my reach. This grant has allowed me to reach a little bit further to access resources to improve my skill set. I scheduled my CNE exam and purchased materials to prepare myself. I attended the Gold Humanism Summit: The Person in Front of You in February, which inspired me to develop a variety of activities about humanism in healthcare. I attended the virtual ATI summit for the first time this year. I will also purchase professional memberships such as NLN and AACN. As a lifelong learner, I have a long list of items on my professional development wish list and am narrowing down what any remaining funds will be spent on. I would like to attend a writing seminar so that I can reach another professional goal of mine which is to get published.

I am excited to have the capability to bring further knowledge to the classroom which will be gained from professional development resources that would have been unattainable without the Nurse Educator Fellowship Program. Thank you for this opportunity.

Christina Cicero MSN, RN, CPN, CNE

Aurora University

I am extremely grateful for the fellowship funds from the Illinois Board of Higher Education and eager to support both my teaching and leadership with continuing education. In my current role as faculty and Chair of the BSN Program, my passion is to educate and support not only my students, but also mentor faculty to be excellent teachers and role models. My passions in higher education in nursing are mentorship and building resiliency. In my everyday practice as an educator, I have begun my work of helping students manage stress and anxiety with gaming, interactive class sessions enhanced with dancing and music, and even dog therapy with my American Eskimo.

The fellowship funds will be used to further enhance my own ability to reduce stress through mediation and mindfulness, and coach my faculty and students so they can make it part of their daily habits as students, educators and professional nurses at the bedside. I strive to model resiliency to my students and faculty by first showing them that we are all human and we will all

have times of stress and overwhelm. In our large BSN program, our students come from varying backgrounds while managing competing responsibilities in addition to a rigorous curriculum, especially in their final semester. By learning how to model self-care and threading these practices into our nursing curriculum, it will make me a stronger leader with the resilience and tools to remain in nursing education during a crucial time for our profession.

Thomas Kunstbeck MSN, RN-BC, CNE

Aurora University

Being awarded the Illinois Board of Higher Education Nurse Educator Fellowship has been a great honor, and I'm grateful for the opportunities that come along with it. The fellowship funds will help me enhance my teaching practice, expand my clinical expertise, and find creative ways to bring nursing alive in the classroom.

I recently attended the ATI Nurse Educator Summit in Salt Lake City. There I was able to learn various ways to utilize AI. The release of ChatGPT and other AI systems has significantly changed what education and nursing practice will look like in the future. It's important I be able to stay up to date and anticipate new ways to better prepare our students.

Over the summer I plan to earn my advanced cardiac life support (ACLS) and pediatric advanced life support (PALS) certifications. My clinical practice never required me to attain these certifications, so I simply viewed them as an additional expense. This fellowship will allow me to learn advanced skills which I can then share with my students.

The remainder of the funds will be used to acquire preserved specimens and a 3D printer to produce our own anatomical models. I would love to inflate a real lung in class to demonstrate the elastic properties and how they contribute to a pneumothorax. The 3D printer will allow me to make custom models such as a heart with transparent coronary arteries or damaged valves.

Jamie Tabrizi MSN-Ed, RN, RNC-MNN, CNE

Aurora University

I am grateful to the Illinois Board of Higher Education for bestowing the Nurse Educator Fellowship allowing me to advance my knowledge and skills as a nursing educator. The Fellowship will provide the opportunity to engage in professional development activities improving my use of simulation technologies. At Aurora University, we have a state-of-the-art simulation center, and I want to learn more ways to utilize simulation in the classroom and contribute to the development of advanced obstetric simulations for nursing students. I plan to take the NLN SIRC Foundation Course Bundle to build simulation education best practices. A majority of the Fellowship will fund my membership to the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation & Learning (INACSL) and attend the INACSL Conference 2024. I am looking forward to collaborating at the conference with our simulation director to develop an OB skills simulation day. This conference will further help me gain new ideas for integrating simulation into the classroom to enhance the student learning experiences and promote nursing clinical judgment. For the classroom, I would like to purchase a low-fidelity simulator that allows students to assess dilation and effacement for a laboring client and integrate this activity into my labor unit. For our in-class newborn assessment simulation activity, I would like to purchase a few key items to help students learn proper placement and technique when performing newborn assessments. I will use some of the fellowship funds to renew my maternal-newborn certification and AWHONN membership to maintain competency in my specialty.

Joan Batres MSN, RN, APRN, FNP-BC

Chamberlain College

Thank you very much for this honor to receive the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship award for 2024. One of my educational goals has always been to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion within the classroom to help develop compassionate, competent, and safe nurses. By developing caring and globally conscious relationships in the classroom, students are more likely to succeed as caring nurses in clinical practice. I believe this is a goal that should be shared among all educators to influence positive patient outcomes.

I plan to use the grant money to further my education and training in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. The funds will help me continue my graduate degree and fund my research and scholarship experiences. Within my DNP program, I have been able to investigate learning strategies that highlight the importance of creating a more culturally aware and inclusive educational environment. My studies have prompted me to discover ways to integrate this philosophy with my pre-licensure students to explore health inequities through case studies, simulation, and assessment demonstrations. Any remaining funds will help fund the next Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion conference for the upcoming year.

Again, I am honored to be recognized as a fellow and intend to use this opportunity to advance my students' education. I sincerely appreciate this monetary award as it helps to support my development towards equity in education.

Michelle Sadko DNP, MSN, RN

Chamberlain College

I am writing to express my intent for the monetary grant of the FY24 Nurse Educator Fellowship award. As a Doctor of Nursing Practice nurse educator for 11 years, I have dedicated my nursing career to support nursing students accomplish their goal of becoming Registered Nurses.

This monetary award would greatly assist in paying for the fees associated with two big goals I have. My first goal is to become a certified nurse educator through the National League of Nursing (NLN). My second goal is to present the study I have conducted: Capstone nursing students' perceptions of required NCLEX educational programs utilized and NCLEX-RN success on the first attempt at the NLN education summit. One indicator of quality the United States State Boards of Nursing concentrates on is the first time NCLEX-RN pass rate. This qualitative study aimed to explore the perceptions of undergraduate bachelorette nursing students' first attempt success on the NCLEX-RN exam. The NLN education summit takes place September 2024 and will provide the opportunity for nurse educators across the country to discover developing topics impacting the nursing education profession and to discover strategies and solutions.

As a nurse educator, advocating scholarship, I will promote positive outcomes for future nurses and educators.

Lissette Mondragon MSN, RN

Chamberlain College

I would like to express my gratitude for being chosen as a IBHE fellow. This is a wonderful opportunity that will benefit the healthcare community for years to come. I have not yet received the monetary portion of the award, but I anticipate the funds will be quite impactful. I am a Doctor of Nursing Practice student. Class fees and book costs are adding up. I would be unable to complete my DNP without the grant. Besides the DNP, I also anticipate participating in leadership development with the funds. There are many webinars available to foster leadership skills in nurses. I wish to take one of the leadership education webinars. Additionally, the funds will help me remain in my role as a faculty member at Chamberlain University. As a single mom, bedside shifts

sometimes seem more ideal than my current 5 day a week salary teaching role. Frequently, I am working beyond 40 hours a week to help create learning content, review concepts, prepare assessments, and meet with students. The grant acknowledges that the academic nurse educator role is challenging and needed to sustain the nursing workforce. I enjoy sharing my passion for nursing with the next generation. That is why I continue to stay in academia. This grant is assisting me in making a difference in the lives of future nurses.

Nurse Educator Fellow

Colleen Milburn MSN, RN, CHFN

Affiliation

College of Lake County

I am pursuing my PhD in Nursing at Illinois State University. I am seeking a higher level of education necessary to gain knowledge needed to improve the current climate in healthcare. I have many ambitious ideas that would benefit nurses and caregivers. However, I currently lack the education to make these ideas become a reality. Research will quantify feeling to help leverage improvements in how our healthcare and healthcare education is delivered

The fellowship grant will aid in financing my education. I am also fortunate that my employer offers some tuition assistance making my PhD a reality without financial burden. I am willing to invest in my education as my greatest asset. I am grateful in the investment that Illinois Board of Nursing Workforce Center is making in me.

Ravinl Roque MSN, RN, MSCRN, PCCN

College of Lake County

As the healthcare landscape continually evolves, pursuing a terminal degree in nursing, such as a Ph.D., is crucial for improving teaching and clinical skills, expanding knowledge to meet industry demand, and supporting career and professional goals to contribute to the future of Illinois nursing. As a Ph.D. student at Illinois State University, a nursing professional must improve and learn research skills to identify gaps, implement evidence-based practices, and contribute to the organization's development and change.

However, challenges exist in my pursuit of a Ph.D. in nursing. One obstacle is the financial aspect of my education. I have applied for financial assistance regarding an educational loan from the federal government to continue my goal. At the same time, working a second job becomes a necessity.

Currently, I am paying my tuition out-of-pocket. Receiving this award will help me and my family and I will be able to continue my education worry-free. I have not received any monetary portion from the 2024 Nurse Educator Fellowship. Upon receiving this award, I will be able pay my existing Spring tuition. The Nurse Educator Fellowship Award will also help me pay my summer and fall 2024 tuition at Illinois State University, including books and other school materials.

Stephanie Byrd DNP, APRN, FNP-BC

DePaul University

Thank you, to Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation and the Illinois Board of Higher Education for awarding me the Fiscal Year 2024 Nurse Educator Fellowship. This award will impact my practice as a nurse practitioner, nurse educator, and nurse administrator. I am using the funds for continuing education credit, to attend the national American Academy of Nurse Practitioners conference and to support professional memberships for local and national nursing organizations. I am attending three national nurse educator conferences to engage with and learn from thought leaders around the country who are teaching our next generation of nurses. I will also

use the funds to purchase nurse educator resources and to obtain my nurse educator certification. Nursing education and technology are advancing rapidly, and it's wonderful to be able to take advantage of these valuable resources. I am grateful for the support that this award offers me to sustain and enrich my role as an experienced nurse clinician and educator.

Kashica Webber-Ritchey PhD, MHA, RN, FAHA

DePaul University

It is a great honor to be selected as a recipient of the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship funding.

Early in my nursing career, I always knew that I would become a nurse educator. This dream was fueled by admiration of nurse educators during my nursing education and my passion to teach. I am so happy to be living out my dream while playing a significant role in preparing future nurse leaders. This awarded fellowship will enable me to continue to grow as a nurse educator by aiding in the refinement of my research knowledge and skills to help achieve my long-term career goal of becoming an independent nurse scientist. I plan to utilize a portion of the awarded funding to develop my grant writing skills and obtain mentorship through the Kemi Doll Get That Grant® program, which is crucial to my research and scholarship. I also plan to utilize funding to attend an international nursing faculty conference. My attendance at this conference will allow me to learn more about the importance of diversity in academia and the implications for nursing practice. Conference attendance will strengthen my teaching pedagogy by keeping me updated on issues pertinent to nursing education. Additionally, conference attendance provides the opportunity for me to present a current manuscript recently accepted for publication and network with other nursing faculty of color. I am truly committed to preparing the next generation of nurses to deliver culturally, competent care to underserved populations. I am grateful for the support through this award.

Jonathan Uebelhor DNP, MSN, NP

Dominican University

The FY2024 Nurse Educator Fellowship Program was instrumental in supporting my academic and professional development in the pursuit of creating a near peer mentorship program for nursing students. Dominican University is a Hispanic Serving Institution, with a population comprised predominantly of first-generation students. Our program is always searching for creative initiatives to support our students in the classroom and sense of belongingness on campus. We have realized the benefits provided through mentorship, however, wanted to strengthen our current program and further embrace these aspects into our curriculum. The Nurse Educator Fellowship Program allowed me to attend the Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators Best Practices Conference in search of unique approaches to improve our mentorship program. This 3-day conference focused on areas of social justice, empowerment, and professional development. The various workshops in this conference provided me with constructive ways to enhance our efforts to support our students and create a stronger sense of community between our cohorts. This conference provided the necessary steps needed to improve our curriculum and to equitably empower our students' learning experiences. Moving into the upcoming fall semester, I will develop upon this expanded vision of our mentorship program to examine ways we can support our diverse student population. I am using additional funding to design our new student orientation in a way that integrates peer mentors into the scheduled workshops. All of these changes would not have been possible without the support of the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

Nurse Educator Fellow

Lindsay Roberts MSN-ED, BSN, RNC-EFM

Affiliation

Eastern Illinois University

I am honored to be selected to be a recipient of the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship 2024. I will be using the funds provided to help with enhancing my nursing education as well help with achieving my Doctorate in Nursing Education from The Ohio State starting in the fall. I also plan to use the funds to work towards obtaining my certified nurse educator certificate (CNE). This award will help me pay for the exam and obtain materials to review. Obtaining this certificate will further enhance my knowledge of nursing education. I anticipate using part of the reward to also attend nursing conferences that would enhance my nursing education and teaching. I am grateful for this award and hope that it is used in a manner that benefits me and all of my students.

Nicole Zeller DNP, RN

Eastern Illinois University

The Nurse Educator Fellowship grant has impacted by practice as a nurse educator in several meaningful ways. I received the funding in a lump sum on May 30, 2024. I used this award to do the following:

- Complete of my Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. I received money to complete my DNP from the Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP). 80 percent of the tuition and fees my total tuition and fees will be forgiven after four years of service as a Nurse Educator. The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) grant allowed me to pay-off the remaining 20% balance for which I was responsible.
- Attend keynote conferences to enhance my scholarship in nursing and diversity, equity, and inclusion practices. I attended the American Association of College of Nursing (AACN) Transform 2023 conference and Sigma International's Health Equity Training. Both conferences provided an opportunity to engage with other nursing education professionals and update our knowledge of the latest evidence-based practice in nursing education from scholars within the profession. This knowledge will be used to help improve nursing student retention and support, especially among diverse minority groups, through the rigors of nursing school.
- Attain my Certified Nurse Educator (CNE) designation from the National League for Nursing (NLN). I have registered for an online review course and received my authorization from NLN that I have eligible to test.

Thank you for this opportunity. If you have further questions, my contact information is as follows: 217.663.7016 or nbzeller@eiu.edu.

Lisa Hodson MSN, RN

Elgin Community College

Thank you to the Illinois Board of Higher Education for awarding me a 2024 Nurse Educator Fellowship. With this fellowship, I am excited to complete an in-depth exploration in the feasibility of introducing virtual reality into the Elgin Community College Nursing program. I will first determine how other nursing programs are currently using virtual reality products, the benefits and pitfalls, and the cost of licensing and headsets. Through my exploration I have identified areas of extra expense not initially considered when determining how virtual reality can close the gap between the classroom, clinical, and nursing practice.

Additionally, I will attend the INASCL virtual extension, where I will continue my exploration of virtual reality, simulation, and how they may prepare students for the complexities of nursing practice. Finally, I will use the remaining funds to purchase virtual reality headsets to enable trials of the chosen virtual reality products in upcoming semesters.

Overall, I am grateful for the fellowship as it is providing the opportunity to push my knowledge of emerging technology, tools, and products that may help students experience decreased distress and increased confidence in their transition from student to practicing nurse by exploring opportunities to care for multiple patients with varying degrees of acuity.

Jennifer Caringella MSN, RN

Elmhurst University

The funding from the IBHE (Illinois Board of Higher Education) Nurse Educator Fellowship will be used for activities that support teaching, professional development, and scholarship. Included will be certification exams and preparation materials. I will be attending and presenting a poster at INACSL (International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning) this year in June. Furthermore, this award allowed to do the “work” on the poster without constraint as I could afford not to pick up additional shifts at the hospital as a staff nurse. The costs incurred with this are airfare, hotel, and conference attendance. In addition, I was able pay for my annual membership dues to Sigma Theta Tau and INACSL. I am enrolled as a DNP (Doctorate in Nursing Practice) student, and a portion of this award will be used for completing my degree. This fellowship provided me opportunities to grow as an educator, contribute to nursing scholarship, and allow me with professional development opportunities that I would not be able to accomplish otherwise. The award allowed me to do the work at home and feel a sense of pride and accomplishment knowing I had the time to spend on these activities as it allowed me to take on less as a staff nurse. I love being an educator to the undergraduate nursing students at Elmhurst University. This award allowed me to grow and develop as an educator to remain in nursing education at Elmhurst University.

Jessica Iamberson DNP, RNC-OB, CNL

Elmhurst University

Thank you to the Illinois Board of Higher Education for awarding me the generous Nurse Educator Fellowship. As I complete my third year as a full-time, tenure track Assistant Professor, the funds have enabled and will allow me to further my personal and professional development. The funds have been and will be used to attend in-person and virtual conferences this year. To date, I have attended AACN’s Diversity Leadership Symposium in February 2024. I plan to attend the NLN Annual Summit in September, Black Mamas Matter Health Conference virtually in September, and DNPs of Color Third Annual Conference in Philadelphia in October. From these conferences I have been and anticipate I will be able to network and build professional relationships across institutional and geographic boundaries. I have also been introduced to work toward advancing equity and belonging in other institutions, new strategies and techniques to use in the classroom and share with faculty peers. These opportunities have encouraged me to further develop my scholarship to share future conferences. Lastly, with any additional funds, I anticipate participating in the NLN Scholarly Writing Retreat. Deepening my pedagogy and praxis and expanding my scholarship are critical to my future in nursing education and necessary for tenure promotion.

Sara Hollenstain MSN-Ed, RN

Heartland Community College

I am incredibly grateful and honored to be a recipient of the IBHE Nurse Fellowship Award for 2024. I recently transitioned to academic nursing education and found my home at Heartland Community College. Our team has been working hard to explore new ways to deliver education and prepare the next generation of nurses. This has involved virtual reality simulation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and outpatient dedicated education units (DEU).

I am newer to the academic field, having been with Heartland for 3 years, but a nurse for 11. This fellowship award will personally help me hone my skills as a nurse educator so I can continue providing new learning opportunities for my students. I will use this award to attend conferences and training activities related to advancing high-fidelity simulation as well as connecting with others who are promoting ambulatory exposure in nursing school.

I am passionate about our DEU process that allows our students to do clinicals in various outpatient offices and home health/hospice settings. I plan to use this award to find courses related to this DEU experience and learn how I can grow my program. I have seen firsthand how impactful this outpatient opportunity can be for students interested in non-hospital community fields after graduation. I would also like to work towards my Certified Nurse Educator certification and this award will allow me to take a prep course and sit for this exam. Thank you for the chance to use this award to better myself as a nurse and educator.

Crystal Reynolds MSN, RN

Heartland Community College

I am immensely appreciative and honored to be a recipient of the Illinois Board of Higher Education Nurse Educator Fellowship. This award will allow me to thoughtfully take part in professional development opportunities such as attending conferences. I have had the opportunity to take part in two conferences so far as a nurse educator. I have found these opportunities to be incredibly beneficial to my personal development as an invested nurse educator. This allowed me the opportunity to network with likeminded, innovative professors and make meaningful connections with educators from the conferences that have a wealth of experience and resources. I feel empowered by what I have gained from these experiences, and ultimately what I have gained is quality exposure to creative teaching methods. This award allows me the opportunity to invest time in robust conferences that will propel my career trajectory, implement creative teaching methods in my classroom, and give me inspiration and insight into how to continue to grow not only individually but also as a community college ADN program. I plan to use these additional resources to purchase study materials to help me obtain my Certified Nurse Educator (CNE) certification. I am committed to my growth as a community college educator. This award is sincerely appreciated for the opportunities it will bring, with much gratitude, thank you.

Susana Calderon PhD, RN

Illinois State University- Mennonite College of Nursing

The Nurse Educator Fellowship Award from the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) will be immensely valuable for me as I progress as a nurse educator role impacting nursing students in their diversity, inclusion, and cultural sensitivity. I currently teach full-time at Illinois State University's Mennonite College of Nursing as an assistant professor. Comparing nursing specialty areas in clinical practice, salaries for nurse educators are relatively modest. This grant will specifically support my ongoing effort and dedication to teach nursing students about diversity and cultural sensitivity. Using my expertise in transcultural nursing, my nursing students will gain valuable insights from my instruction on Latino culture and the Spanish language. In 2022, the Latino

population in the USA was around 62.1 million or 18.7% of the total population. There are approximately 2.2 million Latinos residing in Illinois or about 17% of the population. These Latino and Spanish-speaking populations in Illinois will require culturally competent nurses. Using my expertise in transcultural nursing, my nursing students will gain valuable insights from my instruction on Latino culture and the Spanish language. The grant funds will specifically be used to support my salary and efforts to continue my education by attending Transcultural Nursing Certification, Certified Nurse Educator, conferences, and associations. I am immensely proud to be teaching the next generation of professional nurses. Additionally, I am grateful for this award.

Kelly Rosecrans MSN, RN, CEN

Illinois State University

From the moment I first precepted a new nurse in the emergency department, I knew I wanted to be involved in nursing education. As I approach my 10th year of full-time teaching, I can still feel those feelings of accomplishment and fulfillment when I see the lights go on for my students. This isn't to say that it has been without its struggles navigating the changing landscape of education and our students. One of the largest changes I have enjoyed is the emergence of more online education options, and my re-engagement in nursing research. I thought I wouldn't have many opportunities for research when I left the bedside, but found it to actually be the opposite! This led me to enroll in a PhD program in 2020, which I plan to finish this December of 2024.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education Nurse Educator Fellow award has been critical in my completing my PhD Research. With these funds, I have been able to dedicate my time to my proposal (which was approved in April 2024) and begin conducting my interviews. Having these funds has allowed me to have a salary supplement, lessening my teaching load over the summer and have the resources necessary to conduct interviews over the summer including recorders, mileage, and childcare. Finishing my PhD will open many doors in academia, and allow me to remain in nursing education and follow my passions for research at the same time.

Cherrill Stockmann PhD, RN, CNE

Illinois State University

I have not yet received the monetary portion of the award. I anticipate receipt of the award will impact my ability to remain in nursing education through professional certifications and conference attendance. My program of research involves development of a mental health Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) to evaluate the clinical competence of undergraduate nursing education. I am conducting an instrument development study for a 12-station OSCE in April 2024. This award will allow me to complete training and certification as a Certified Healthcare Simulation Educator, which will enhance my ability to develop and implement a mental health OSCE. I will obtain membership in the Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) to engage with educators who are also using OSCEs. I will attend SSH events for advanced simulation education, which includes peer-reviewed programs and hands-on learning in leading-edge simulation technology and collaboration. I will maintain membership in my local Sigma Theta Tau Chapter to promote the development of nursing leaders. I will use the award to attend national and international conferences for simulation in healthcare to establish a network with colleagues who are using OSCEs in undergraduate nursing education. This award will also be used for travel expenses regarding the presentation of my OSCE research at the Midwest Nursing Research Annual Conference.

Cathy Lenkaitis MSN, RN

Illinois Valley Community College

I am honored and humbled to have been chosen as a recipient of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Nurse Educator Fellowship award. This fellowship award represents an extraordinary opportunity for me to further develop my expertise as a nurse educator and contribute to the advancement of the nursing profession. The fellowship award will allow me to attend several conferences and training sessions throughout the coming year. I am particularly excited to attend training courses focusing on nursing simulation where I will learn to leverage simulation technology to create immersive and interactive learning experiences that simulate real-world clinical scenarios and promote critical thinking among students. I plan to attend Drexel University to obtain a certificate in simulation and Mayo Clinic's Comprehensive Course in Simulation Instructor Development.

I am eager to collaborate with fellow nurse educators to develop educational programs aimed at cultivating a diverse nursing workforce that addresses the evolving needs of the healthcare industry. I plan to attend the 2024 OADN conference where I will have the opportunity to network with fellow nurse educators from other associate degree nursing programs.

It is my passion to foster an environment that ensures future generations of nurses develop the clinical competence and critical thinking skills necessary to provide quality patient care. I am confident this award will help me emerge as a more effective and innovative educator, equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources to inspire the next generation of nursing professionals.

Stephanie Moore MSN, RN

Illinois Wesleyan University

The IBHE award will allow me to continue my passion for training nursing students to transition into professional practice with greater confidence and skill. I have been a nurse for 28 years, 15 in leadership, and 9 in the academic setting. My passion quickly turned into leadership of nurses, educating myself in all facets of healthcare, and the development of the professional nurse. I have expertise in leadership management (acute and outpatient settings), public health, and recruitment. I am dedicated to my work at Illinois Wesleyan University (IWU), School of Nursing, and I plan to continue my employment.

I plan to use the funds to attend the AACN Transform 24 conference, focus will be on how to lead, learn, and connect with students. This conference is designed for faculty teaching at the baccalaureate and masters level. I will attend a preconference on simulation and competency based learning. Networking and learning from experts in the field will better equip me to prepare future nurses. I also plan to use the award to continue my membership in Sigma Theta Tau and American Nurses Association. As a 10 month contracted university employee, a stipend for the month of June will be used to plan for public health clinicals and meet with clinical partners. I am working on furthering a pilot project with designated education units in ambulatory settings. Thank you again for awarding me this grant, I am honored to receive it.

Shelby Guthrie MSN, RN, FNP-BC,

Kaskasia College

Receipt of the Nurse Educator fellowship award would profoundly impact my ability to remain in nursing education and further enhance my contributions to the field. The fellowship would provide additional resources, support, and opportunities for professional development, allowing me to stay updated with the latest advancements in nursing education. This ongoing learning and growth would directly benefit my role as an Assistant Professor of Nursing, enabling me to create inclusive and diverse learning environments for my students. As part of my commitment support the

financial implementation of the Epic Lyceum training program. Furthermore, I am eager to take on the role of the Epic training champion for our institution. I feel this will be a great asset to the student's future, will allow me to enhance their educational experience, and will prepare them to have competency in an EHR system utilized by local healthcare systems. Additionally, the fellowship's recognition and validation would strengthen my credibility and influence within the nursing education community, leading to increased collaboration opportunities and contributions to broader initiatives to improve nursing education and advance diversity in the nursing workforce. The skills and knowledge gained through the fellowship would enhance my effectiveness as an advocate for ethical leadership, diversity, and inclusion in nursing. This would be particularly beneficial as I pursue my doctoral degree in nursing practice, focusing on strategies for enhancing diversity and inclusion in nursing education. Receiving the Nurse Educator fellowship would empower me to make meaningful contributions to advancing nursing education, diversity, and inclusion initiatives.

Katy Knolhoff MSN, RN, FNP

Kaskasia College

Winning the Nurse Educator Fellowship Award is truly an honor, and I am grateful for the recognition of my dedication to nursing education. Anticipating the receipt of this award will undoubtedly have a significant impact on my ability to continue in nursing education.

The monetary portion of the award will greatly alleviate the financial strain associated with pursuing my doctorate program at McKendree University. By covering tuition expenses and essential academic materials, such as textbooks and research resources, the award will allow me to focus more on my studies and research, rather than worrying about financial constraints. This will ensure a smoother academic journey and enable me to contribute meaningfully to the field of nursing through my research work and teaching.

Furthermore, the award will support my ongoing education and professional development by facilitating attendance at conferences, seminars, and workshops. These events are essential for staying current in the field of nursing and networking with peers. Additionally, the award will enable me to pay for professional dues, granting me access to resources and communities that contribute to my growth as a nursing educator.

In summary, receiving the Nurse Educator Fellowship Award will not only alleviate financial burdens but also enable me to advance my professional journey and make a meaningful impact in the field of nursing education and practice. I am deeply committed to maximizing the potential of this award to further my capabilities as a nursing educator and contribute to the future of behavioral health nursing.

Katelyn Bloemer MSN, RN

Lake Land College

With the generosity of the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship award, I will be able to implement more pediatric content throughout our Nursing program. With being in a rural location, our nursing students do not have an opportunity to have a clinical rotation specific to pediatrics.

My plan for the use of the funds is to meet with other faculty members throughout the program, and recognize specific areas in their classroom that pediatrics can be expanded. This will be a very time-consuming process, so the funds will help supplement the extra hours spent working on filling the content gaps in our curriculum.

I will also be intensifying the current pediatric simulation day that I have previously created. Students will be exposed to more pediatric disease processes and care and treat for these

individuals. The current simulation day is fairly basic and only a 5 hour simulation day. I will be expanding this to a 7 hour simulation day. The funds will help with the prep work on this simulation day, along with supplementing the 2 extra hours spend during each simulation day.

I am very grateful for the opportunity this award has given me, and the current and prospective nursing students for our program.

Nurse Educator Fellow

Tarah Haskenherm MSN, RN

Affiliation

Lake Land College

Thank you to the Illinois Board of Higher Education and the Illinois Nursing Workforce Center for your commitment and dedication to nurse educators! It is a privilege and honor to have been chosen to receive a Nurse Educator Fellowship Award! This award has allowed me to continue researching and creating new and exciting teaching strategies. During my time at Lake Land College, I have assisted in creating and implementing several new activities for the lab, simulation, clinical, and classroom settings. Specifically, this award has allowed me to focus my attention on a new exam preparation/remediation policy for our students. In the past, we have utilized a basic, non-creative remediation approach that focused on students' weak areas following an exam. I am in the process of adding an exam preparation component to the remediation assignment. This exam preparation portion helps them be more prepared for the actual course exam. The revitalized remediation portion includes meaningful activities to help improve the students' knowledge of the subject matter and also improve their test-taking abilities. I first implemented this new idea Fall 2023 and I have received positive feedback from the students thus far. I plan to continue to research best exam preparation/remediation practices and use my creativity to keep improving this new strategy. Thank you for the opportunity and support to keep creating new and modern learning strategies to help our students be successful!

Jennifer Bosworth APRN, FNP-BC

Lewis University

The IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship Program has been such a rewarding experience for me over this last year and I am grateful for being selected as a grant recipient. As a nurse educator, I am committed to instilling in my students the significance of health promotion within our communities. Through the generous support of the fellowship, I have been able to obtain an array of supplies and resources tailored for health promotion in the community setting. These items have already helped assist students with assessments, screenings, and educational presentations at health fairs, schools, senior centers, and other community events. In just this semester alone, I have had the privilege of participating in five events where students used these materials to conduct screenings and promote health. Witnessing their engagement and the impact they have made has been rewarding. Moreover, this fellowship has provided me with opportunities for professional growth and development. It has allowed me to advance my career by attending nursing conferences, purchasing learning resources to help support my clinical practice, and joining professional organizations.

Cynthia Hinojosa DNP, APRN, ANP-BC, AGACNP-BC, CCRN, CNL

Lewis University

I was honored to be chosen as a fellowship recipient to further my professional development in simulation within the graduate nursing program, specifically in the nurse practitioner tracks. The funding allowed me to pay dues to various professional organizations and attend a course and conference in simulation. However, the majority of the funds were allocated to course fees in

simulation. I attended the three-day Simulation Instructor Development – Comprehensive Course at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. During the three-day course, I participated in hands-on training with a team of multidisciplinary healthcare professionals, where we learned about simulation design, implementation, evaluation, and the pre-briefing and debriefing process. This course inspired me to create more effective and engaging learning experiences for my students.

I also attended the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning (INACSL) annual conference held in Raleigh, NC. At this conference, I gained insights into innovative simulation design and implementation and ways to incorporate simulation as another tool to evaluate competency at the graduate level.

The fellowship funds have been instrumental in keeping me current with evolving trends in simulation. The knowledge gained from these experiences has stimulated my learning and equipped me with the tools to be innovative in preparing nurse practitioners for the complexities of modern healthcare in both inpatient and outpatient settings. In addition, I have increased my confidence in utilizing simulation as an added element of graduate nursing education.

Jeanine Haberman DNP, MBA, CNE

Lewis University

St. John Baptist de LaSalle the visionary educator of Lewis University said, “Young people need good teachers, like visible angels.” As an IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship award recipient, I will be afforded the privilege to retrace the footsteps of Saint John Baptist de La Salle through France in May of 2024. My IBHE funded trip will propel Lewis University’s efforts to advance equity by providing a well-prepared, diverse nursing workforce and will afford me an international nursing educational opportunity to advance my nursing faculty colleagues and students in the Undergraduate and Graduate Nursing Programs at Lewis University. This expanded knowledge will not only benefit the students I teach, but also the faculty, nursing programs, and professional organizations I serve.

This award will allow me to remain serving all nursing students in nursing education as well as the nursing profession community in the state of Illinois.

I firmly believe in the Catholic Lasallian mission to serve all students, especially the underrepresented and poor. During my years of teaching, I have realized that teaching is a privilege to improve patient care outcomes, drive inclusive change, and stabilize our future nursing workforce. This trip offers me a fresh international nursing perspective through a LaSallian educator lens. It is my distinct honor to advance equity through a well-prepared, diverse workforce as we prepare the next generation of nurses. I greatly appreciate this recognition and am humbly honored to be awarded this grant funding among an esteemed group of Illinois nurse educators. Thank you!

Joi Kazenski DNP, RN, CPN

Lincoln Land Community College

I am extremely grateful and honored to have been selected for the Nurse Educator Fellowship Award from the Illinois Board of Higher Education. To achieve this feels like an overwhelming accomplishment of my academic pursuits to further my teaching career. After finishing my doctorate degree in 2020, I quickly realized the continued need for higher education nursing instructors. I have been working at Lincoln Land Community College for almost seven years and have enjoyed serving the community and increasing nursing knowledge for the associate degree nursing students. The award from this fellowship has allowed me to help repay my student loans

that were in forbearance and now I have re-started with payments post-graduation. As a new mother who has continued to work full-time at the college while still working PRN at the hospital, the fellowship award has helped to continue my working status while fulfilling my love for teaching. I plan on continuing to serve the community and work at the college and eventually want to complete my certificate for nursing education (CNE). As a nursing educator, the impact of my personal knowledge greatly influences the teaching and spread of scholastic information I will pass to my students. I appreciate the award to be able to influence future nurses to come.

Casey Hoenes MSN, FNP

Lincoln Land Community College

I am grateful to the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship Award committee for selecting me to be a recipient of this year's awards. Due to your generosity, I can begin my doctorate education at Liberty University. I will be working toward my PhD in nursing education. My first class is scheduled to begin in late October. As you know, having PhD prepared nurses is important to the future of nursing education. We need PhD nurses for research, education, and leadership. Last year, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) reported that since 2013, enrollment in PhD nursing programs has decreased by almost 15%. Your contribution invests in the future of nursing in Illinois. For me personally, pursuing the PhD in nursing will invest in my plans to stay teaching in Associate degree nursing programs. All five years of my teaching career have been in community colleges. I value this educational setting and have grown to appreciate the opportunity that community colleges provide to these students. Additionally, the grant has allowed me to pay back some student loan debt remaining from my Masters degree. This monetary support helps me to stay in nursing education while moving forward with my doctorate degree. In short, thank you for your commitment to *our* success and the nursing profession here in Illinois.

Eric Zack RN, ACNP-BC, AOCN, BMTCN

Loyola University

I presented an oncology related general session lecture at and attended the rest of the Nurse Practitioners of Acute Care Conference (NPAC) in Chicago, Illinois in March, 2024 (<https://www.npcourses.com/npac2024/conference-program/>). I received 21.75 contact hours of continuing education (including 13.25 hours of pharmacology and 2.75 hours of advanced procedures). I also attended and presented two other oncology-related posters at the 49th Annual ONS Congress in Washington, D.C. in April, 2024 (<https://www.ons.org/congress>, <https://ons.confex.com/ons/2024/cp/eposterview.cgi?eposterid=3312>, and <https://ons.confex.com/ons/2024/qj/eposterview.cgi?eposterid=3618>). I received another 20+ continuing educational credits and paid all my conference expenses out of pocket. These are required to renew my professional certifications, advanced practice and registered nursing licenses, and to maintain my Clinical Assistant Professor teaching position at Loyola University-Chicago. I also gained the opportunity to network with the best and brightest nurse leaders in my field and learn from others by attending these conferences. I always seek to promote my own personal growth and development as a nurse educator. I must be aware of the evolving science and resultant nursing practice changes to be able to effectively teach these concepts to my students in class. These fellowship funds will assist me with advancing nursing research, scholarship, and dissemination. I enjoy teaching nursing school and creating a supportive environment that fosters excellent learning and vital critical thinking skills. Thank you for your support.

Nurse Educator Fellow

Tracey Hosack-Bartnick DNP, RN, AGNP-BC, BMTCN

Affiliation

Loyola University

Thank you to the Illinois Board of Education and the Illinois Nursing Workforce Center for your generous support. I am extremely honored to be selected as a recipient of the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship for 2024. The financial award I received is being applied to tuition costs so that I can study Applied Positive Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. I intend to apply what I am learning within academia and at the bedside.

Almost 4 years post the COVID pandemic, addressing the high rates of nurse burnout has never been a more pressing issue than at the present time. Burnout among nurses negatively impacts their physical, emotional, and mental health. As a nurse educator at Loyola, my interests include exploring and applying evidence-based strategies to build resilience among nursing students while they are still in the academic setting. I believe that people have more agency over their wellbeing than most realize and that practical skills can be taught and applied to everyday life to navigate adversity and thrive in a challenging environment. As we prepare nurses to enter this profession, we should give them tools to meet the demands of a high stakes setting before they begin their career. I am excited to strengthen my knowledge in this area and applying it within the Loyola ABSN setting.

Demetris Hogan DNP, MBA, RN

Loyola University

In 2024, I was honored to be chosen as a recipient of the IBHE Nurse Fellowship. As a new staff member at Loyola University Chicago, this fellowship has been invaluable in helping me establish myself as a faculty member. Being a person of color, I am committed to increasing the representation of people of color in the nursing curriculum. The opportunities I have had so far have given me insight and innovative ideas to incorporate into the courses I teach.

As I researched areas of opportunity, I discovered many resources available, and the money helped me gain access. I have increased my knowledge of DEI and SDOH. I learned a surprising fact, as I was looking for ways to increase my knowledge in one area, I learned something completely new! The most impactful information is how our environment impacts the health of all, but especially how it affects the lives of underserved populations.

The funds allowed me to become a member of ACHNE, the Association of Community Health Nurse Educators. The membership lets me work with other nurse educators across the US to improve the nursing curriculum to make positive impacts in the future. As Lao Tzu stated, 'Give a man a fish you feed him for a day, teach a man to fish and feed him for a lifetime'.

Again, thank you for choosing me and I will continue to work to improve the profession of nursing and the education of future nurses.

Ines Guillen DNP, RN

CCC, Malcolm X College

My doctoral program in nursing at Northern Kentucky University was completed in December 2023. I want to apply the funding from the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Nurse Educator Fellowship program toward my loan that helped pay my tuition at Northern Kentucky University. The monetary award will significantly reduce my student loan. One of the essential principles of the nursing profession is that learning is a persistent process, as a nursing faculty, you are expected always to find ways to grow intellectually in your profession. The nursing profession is always

changing, thus being up to date on new research findings is essential to becoming a skilled practitioner. My goal is to bring about transformation in the clinical context involving students and the didactic domain. The doctoral program has helped develop my skills in effective project planning, transformational leadership, policy advocacy, and systems-level thinking. As a doctorate-prepared nurse, I now know how to apply research findings to my practice by identifying best practices and evidence-based teaching methodologies to include in my instruction. I sincerely appreciate receiving this scholarship and promise to remain dedicated to sharing my knowledge with Illinois's aspiring nurses.

Dawn Wilson DNP, RN

CCC, Malcolm X College

I am honored to be chosen as one of the recipients of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Nurse Educator Fellowship award. This financial award will enable me to continue working in nursing education and help me develop personally and professionally. Additionally, my spirit of inquiry will further enhance the value of my students' learning experience.

Thanks to this award, I will be able to attend a wide range of conferences, to learn innovative teaching methods to help engage students who may be struggling *inside* the classroom due to factors *outside* of the classroom. Therefore, I plan to attend the American Holistic Nurses Conference, which focuses on complementary and alternative healing holistically. In my role as an Educator, I will impart this knowledge to my students, empowering them to cultivate an understanding of holistic care's significance in self-care and the healthcare realm. Furthermore, I plan to attend the 52nd National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) International Conference to explore innovative solutions to address social and economic challenges faced by primarily African American students.

I am particularly interested in discovering novel approaches to meet students at their individual levels, establish pathways towards social and economic equity, and uphold academic excellence within the classroom setting. In conclusion, this award will galvanize me to ignite a spark in the classroom that is transformative and evolutionary.

Theresa Schwindenhammer PhD, RN

Methodist College

My goal with the funds from the IBHE scholar program is to implement different teaching and learning strategies to help my students to develop their clinical reasoning skills by using virtual reality as a simulation game activity. Today's nursing students need different ways to learn to meet their diverse learning needs and to be actively involved in their own learning and to embrace technology. Virtual reality is an effective pedagogy for nursing students that is safe and engages students in the learning process (Salminen-Tuomaala et al, 2018; Salminen-Toumaala, 2023). I plan to use virtual simulation in all my clinical courses and especially the internship course. In the internship course I will develop a multiple patient scenario where the student starts off with one patient and then works up to a full team of four to five patients. The simulation game software replicates clinical reasoning processes in real world situations (Salminen-Toumaala, 2023). The game elements will be built around the process of clinical reasoning. The student will have to recognize cues, analyze cues, process information to formulate nursing diagnosis, identify problems, plan nursing interventions, and evaluate outcomes for each patient. I would like to purchase virtual reality headsets to use for the gaming simulation. The students will access the virtual reality

headsets within our simulation center at flexible times that students are on campus. I also plan to take the Certified Nurse Educator Exam.

Nurse Educator Fellow

Taylor Rogy MSN, RN

Affiliation

Methodist College

My goal with the funds from the IBHE scholar program is to provide students with enhanced technology and evidence-based teaching styles to promote critical thinking in our Community Based Primary Care Certification program. This program allows for students who are currently in their baccalaureate RN program to receive a Primary Care Certification in addition to their BSN. This program provides students with the knowledge to enter a community health role that is primary care focused post-graduation. It allows students to complete their clinical hours required with a primary care site that serves as a DEU (Designated Education Unit). This DEU provides on the job training to be able to transition to practice with the assigned DEU post-licensure which enhances job placement rates and decreases burnout in new graduate nurses. Within Primary Care, telehealth is being used heavily to manage patients with complex medical histories who lack resources such as transportation to and from appointments or those who are home bound. Educating baccalaureate students on how to communicate telephonically and complete phone triage is important in their practice as they enter the profession. I plan to use the funds to receive a certification in telehealth education and embed it in the certification program and in the prelicensure curriculum in the community health course. I also plan to use the money to attend nurse educator conferences to enhance my teaching ability in both the classroom and clinical.

Audra Trump DNP, APRN, FNP-C

Millikin University

The 2024 IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship Award provides recipients the opportunity to showcase their dedication and excellence in advancing nursing education. I am honored to be a recipient of such an award which allows me to bolster professional development within nursing.

Winning the 2024 IBHE Fellowship Award not only validates the tireless efforts of nurse educators but also signifies a commitment to continuous learning and innovation in the field. This award serves as a catalyst for personal growth, empowering educators to explore new horizons and expand their impact within academic and clinical settings.

The fellowship funding is making it possible to attend specialized workshops and conferences as well as adding books to our leadership library. These things would not be possible without the fellowship funding. Professional development enhances the students learning and attending courses on faculty development will help me become a better educator. These funds facilitate the acquisition of advanced teaching methodologies and the development of engaging learning environments.

In conclusion, winning the 2024 IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship Award and the strategic utilization of funding to support professional development will enhance student outcomes and strengthen my teaching ability. By investing professional development, and advocating for educational excellence, nurse educators propel the field forward, ensuring the preparation of competent and compassionate nursing professionals for generations to come.

Angela Lafrenz MSN, FNP-C

Millikin University

I am honored to be a recipient of the 2024 IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship Award. I pursued a career in nursing education to positively impact the next generation of nurses. Nursing educators

are responsible for imparting knowledge and skills, mentoring and guiding, promoting critical thinking, fostering professional development, and updating curriculum to prepare students to provide evidence-based care.

The IBHE award will enable me to attend professional development courses, including a course focusing on updating the curriculum with simulation activities. By using realistic scenarios in nursing education, simulation enhances students' clinical skills, improves critical thinking, increases confidence and competence, enhances teamwork and communication, and reduces anxiety. Additionally, simulation provides a safe environment for students to practice and make mistakes without risking patient safety. Simulation helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Throughout simulation, nursing students can experience a wide range of clinical scenarios including rare and complex cases students may not encounter during clinical rotations. Simulation is now imperative to the success of future nurses, and educators must incorporate this hands-on approach in all classes. I look forward to learning more about this modality and am grateful that the IBHE supports and funds these types of nurse educator experiences.

Kelly Slade MSN, APRN-FPA

Millikin University

The IBHE Fellowship aims to foster academic growth and professional development among scholars committed to advancing education. By receiving this award, I can attend more continuing education and purchase more resources that aid in providing the best education for our students. I am a full-time instructor at Millikin University in the School of Nursing. My responsibilities include teaching both in the undergraduate and graduate nursing programs. I am also pursuing my Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. My topic of clinical change is related to simulation in nursing education. This fellowship will support my research, which seeks to determine the significance of simulation on baccalaureate degree nurses and their transition to practice. The anticipated outcome includes a higher NCLEX pass rate and a smoother transition to nursing practice. These outcomes will contribute to a broader understanding of simulation in nursing education. I am excited to achieve this goal that will enable me to grow as a nurse educator and a family nurse practitioner.

By participating in the IBHE fellowship, I aim to develop my skills further, engage with a network of like-minded professionals, and contribute meaningfully to the field of education. The nursing field is ever-changing, and I genuinely believe staying current on education is necessary.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Kelli Nichols DNP, APRN, FNP-BC

Moraine Valley Community College

As a member of the nursing profession and a nurse educator at Moraine Valley Community College (MVCC), I would like to express gratitude for the Nurse Educator Fellowship from the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Over the last decade, I have devoted my professional career and volunteer efforts to improving student success. The hard work dedicated to preparing nurses will have a positive impact on society.

In preparing students to become exceptional nurses, learning occurs in various learning modalities. In the lab setting, faculty need to engage and prepare students to care for patients in hospital environments. To enhance my educational preparations as a faculty member, I am attending a nursing simulation course to prepare for the nursing simulation certification. Upon

successful completion, I will host a workshop for my colleagues to review the key aspects of creating a simulation. Additionally, I will be attending the next OADN Nursing Conference. My goal is to attend sessions geared toward diversity, equity, and inclusion, student retention and success, and innovative learning strategies. The knowledge and skills I gain from these conferences and training programs will help me understand changes in the field of nursing education and provide me with resources to develop innovative enhancements in MVCC's nursing program, which will be included in the student success series.

Overall, my goal is to continue growing and learning to become the best nurse educator I can be at Moraine Valley Community College.

Jacinda Ross MSN, BSN, RN

Moraine Valley Community College

Receipt of the Illinois Board for Higher Education fellowship award is something I am very honored to receive and very thankful for. A portion of this award has allowed me to begin pursuing my Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Certificate. This continued post-master's certification will open many doors for me in my career as a member of the nursing faculty at Moraine Valley Community College (MVCC). Mental health is such an important area of everyone's lives whether a patient, nursing student, or fellow faculty member.

A portion of the award will be used to join the American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA) and the International Association of Clinical Simulation and Learning (INACSL). These associations will provide current, best practice data which will be a valuable addition to our mental health nursing courses and clinicals. I will be able to add to the existing curriculum as well as create new Simulations and curriculum. Some diagnoses in mental health pose safety risks to the healthcare workers and the Simulation lab provides a controlled, safe space for students to experience these situations and gain knowledge in how to best approach them. I will also be able to stay up to date on mental health information and best practices. There has been an increase in anxiety, depression, and mental health diagnoses over the past few years. My increased knowledge in this area of nursing can be applied to educating MVCC nursing students, and even faculty, in mental health awareness, nursing care, and self-care.

Julianne Hermann MSN, RN

Morton College

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for this esteemed fellowship award for nursing faculty. It is an honor to have the opportunity to share how I intend to utilize this award to advance my professional development and further contribute to the field of nursing education. Although only a quarter of the fellowship has been distributed to me at this time, I have also included future plans for the award.

A substantial portion of the fellowship award, approximately \$5,000, will be allocated towards my pursuit of a doctoral program. This investment aligns closely with my long-standing aspiration to attain a doctoral degree in nursing. By allocating these funds to my doctoral education, I aim to enhance my expertise and proficiency in nursing, thereby enabling me to make more substantial contributions through advanced research, teaching, and leadership endeavors.

The remaining \$2,000 of the fellowship award will be directed towards faculty development initiatives. Therefore, I intend to utilize this portion of the award to attend conferences, workshops, and professional development courses that will enable me to enhance my teaching methodologies, cultivate inclusivity in education, and remain informed about emerging healthcare technologies.

Once again, I extend my heartfelt appreciation for the recognition and support provided through this fellowship award.

Anitha Saravanan PhD, RN, ANP-BC

Northern Illinois University

As the major work force among the world's healthcare personnel, nurses significantly impact the availability and quality of care received by patients. Unfortunately, the existing shortage of nurses was further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and there is still an alarming rate of nurse turnover and an inability to recruit and train to replace the nurses rapidly exiting the profession. As a nurse educator, I am well situated to create innovative projects to address nurse retention. As I was thinking on how to make a change, the IBHE fellowship award encouraged me to take a step forward to serve faculty at international level which can help create bridges and new opportunities. With the help of the IBHE fellowship award, I have enthusiastically used my time to successful in creating a virtual research mentorship and collaboration project with faculties in India. I provide mentoring and training sessions to about 25 faculty, most of whom had a master's level of nursing education. The sessions were held for about 2 hours on a monthly basis. During each session, faculty were engaged in group discussions and presentations on their areas of interest in research. While exploring future possibilities, as a team, we have decided to create a remote nurse specialist program which will be built on these collaborations that we have developed over the past few years. I will be using the IBHE award to continue to work on this global project with many more nurses to build scholarships and create new programs.

Alyse Flury DNP, MS, RN

Northern Illinois University

The IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship has significantly impacted my professional development, influenced my scholarship activities, and enhanced my leadership abilities. As a nurse educator, I feel privileged to have the opportunity to inspire, teach, and mentor the next generation of nurses. I am dedicated to instilling the need to provide caring and compassionate nursing care to all patients, but specifically to patients who suffer from mental illnesses. Receiving this grant has allowed me to become more well-versed in the intricacies of mental health to prepare students to properly care for not only the patient's physical health but also the patient's mental health. It is imperative to address the prevalence of mental health, as it is truly in every area of nursing.

The allocated funds have allowed me to attend and present at the American Psychiatric Nursing Association National Conference. In addition to attending the APNA National Conference, I will also be attending and presenting at the Nurse Educator Conference in June 2024. These invaluable experiences will add to the enhancement of my professional knowledge and skills, while allowing me to network with fellow nurse educators and leaders. As a current member of APNA, I have used the funds to pay for my annual membership fees. Additionally, this grant has allowed me to continue working on my manuscript - *Preparing the Psychiatric Nursing Workforce for the Future: An Integrative Review with an International Perspective*.

Receiving this award is an honor. I thank the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

Janna Woddard DNP, MSN, RN

Northern Illinois University

My name is Janna Woodard, and I am an Assistant Professor at Northern Illinois University. I am honored and humbled to be a recipient of the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship Award. This award will be beneficial to progress in my scholarship and research by allowing membership and

subscriptions to professional organizations. These professional organizations include International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning, Sigma Theta Tau, National League of Nursing, American Nurses Association and Healthy Simulation. Many webinars can be viewed from each of these groups that will aid in my professional development with a focus on debriefing in virtual simulation and engagement in the classroom focusing on the principles of the neuroscience of learning. This will aid in the development of course material and updating of curriculum.

These funds will support in my preparation and testing for certification of Certified Nurse Educator (CNE). Preparation courses will be purchased as well as resources to aid in the successful completion of the certification of the CNE. This grant will assist in the completion and publication of a research project and the preparation of another to start in the fall. A small portion of these funds will be used for incidentals while traveling to the Nurse Educator Conference where I will be presenting on my research.

This award is presenting opportunity for growth as an educator and as a scholar and I am grateful for this opportunity.

Kristina King MSN, CSN-PEL, CNE

North Park University

I am honored to receive the 2024 Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Nurse Educator Fellowship Award. I am currently enrolled at Illinois State University's PhD in Nursing program. I am beginning my second year in the program and anticipate having all course work completed by next summer, starting my dissertation at that time. In my PhD program, I am looking to study student characteristics indicative of success in Direct-Entry Masters of Science in Nursing (DEMSN) programs. As a faculty member in a DEMSN program, I have watched students enroll in the fast-paced program ill-equipped for the demands and unable to progress through the program. This places burden on faculty trying to support these students and places stress on these students in terms of finances and career aspirations. Fast-track DEMSN programs are viable solutions for combating our growing nursing workforce while also creating fast-track options for nurses interested in a Masters concentration in Nursing Education, which is also experiencing a growing workforce shortage. This monetary award will help me pay off tuition in this program. I am grateful for this award as it helps pay off tuition for my PhD which will help expand knowledge in the DEMSN program student population. Thank you!

Theresa Kirwan MS, MSN, CMSRN

Oakton College

As a Nurse educator at Oakton College for the last five years, I have consistently worked at trying new ideas to educate our nursing students to achieve not only academic success but also clinical success. I have utilized a variety of technology to enhance my teaching to nursing students and became a member of our Global Studies committee at Oakton College to discover new ways for our students to gain nursing education. This group utilizes their time to develop study-abroad opportunities for students. This fellowship will give me the chance to build a program for our nursing students. Upon receiving the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Nurse Educator Fellowship Award, I plan to develop a study-abroad program in Galway, Ireland that will incorporate not just cultural awareness but also the opportunity to work in the hospital environment in a foreign country.

Many years ago, I had the experience of working in Galway hospitals and care settings. I plan on developing a course with the existing nursing program at the University of Galway, Ireland that will

enable our Oakton Nursing students to enhance their nursing skills abroad. The University has a variety of courses that are offered to study abroad students. I am excited that this award has enabled me to work at developing such an opportunity for my students.

Nurse Educator Fellow

Danielle Coleman PhD, MSN, RN

Affiliation

Prairie State College

First, THANK YOU to the Illinois Board of Higher Education and Illinois Nursing Workforce Center for presenting me with this award. As a community college professor, teaching at the same community college I earned my nursing degree from, has been one of the best experiences of my life. I always knew growing up that I wanted to be a nurse, but becoming a nursing educator far exceeds my dreams. Being able to be a part of another person's journey to join one of the best career fields is such an honor. This award will help me to provide our students with the best learning opportunities we can.

I will use this award to go to the INACSL conference to better prepare me for my new role as a simulation coordinator, which will allow me to merge real-world and the classroom to further help our students learn to apply the knowledge in a safe space. Other conferences I will be attending are the NLN Summit and OADN Conference. I will also be taking the CNE preparation course, and the exam, using this award. In doing so, it will further assist in my pathway to success as a nurse educator.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to further improve as a nurse educator. The signature line on my email says it all, "to change the face of nursing one student at a time".

Karen Black-Vetter DNP, MSN/Ed, RN

Rockford University

The fellowship grant will significantly enhance my professional capabilities and contribute to the advancement of nursing education at my institution. I will first pursue a Master Online Teaching certification to better facilitate online nursing courses. As online nursing education is rapidly growing, this certification will enable me to design and deliver effective virtual learning experiences.

Additionally, I will engage in the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) program to achieve excellence in online teaching. This program will further strengthen my online teaching skills, ensuring that I can provide high-quality education in virtual settings. The importance of online teaching in nursing cannot be overstated, as it supports the progression of nursing education by making it more accessible and adaptable to the needs of modern students. Achieving the Certified Nurse Educator (CNE) credential is both a personal and professional goal. This certification will validate my expertise in nursing education, enhancing my credibility and effectiveness as an educator.

Finally, I will undertake a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) review course to prepare for the FNP board certification. This will facilitate my professional growth and development, allowing me to expand my clinical expertise and contribute more comprehensively to patient care and nursing education. The fellowship grant will thus enable me to achieve key milestones in my career, ultimately benefiting my students and the broader healthcare community.

Caryn Ruzic MSN, APRN, FNP-BC

Rockford University

The IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship Award has positively impacted my ability to

continue my professional development ultimately enhancing the quality of nursing education I deliver.

Firstly, I will pursue a Masters Online Teaching certification to better facilitate online courses. As the field of online nursing education continues to grow, this certification will equip me with the necessary skills to create engaging and effective virtual learning environments. Online teaching in nursing is particularly beneficial as it provides flexibility for students, accommodates diverse learning styles, and increases access to education for those who might not be able to attend traditional in-person classes.

Additionally, as a Nurse Practitioner, I will utilize the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) program to strengthen both my in-person and online teaching capabilities. This training will enhance my ability to deliver high-quality education, ensuring that my students receive the best possible preparation for their professional roles. Improved teaching methodologies benefit students by fostering a deeper understanding of course material and promoting critical thinking skills essential for nursing practice.

Furthermore, I will enhance my simulation knowledge through the National League for Nursing Simulation Innovation Resource Center (NLN SIRC) course bundle. Simulation is a crucial component of nursing education, providing realistic, hands-on experiences without the risk to patients. This training will enable me to ensure our simulation-based learning is cutting-edge and impactful. This comprehensive approach to professional development will significantly benefit both my students and the broader educational community.

Tristan Banks DNP, MHA, RN, CNL

Rush University

I am honored, grateful, and humbled to have been awarded the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Nurse Educator Fellowship. Although I have not received and utilized the funds to date, I anticipate using the money to purchase materials and take courses to help me prepare for and obtain my certification as a clinical nurse educator. The award won't cover all the learning opportunities I am seeking to further my knowledge around enhancing my role as a nurse educator, but it is a wonderful stepping-stone for covering the costs, and for that I am thankful. My love for education stems from having great instructors while I was in nursing school at Rush for both my BSN as well as my DNP degrees. I am proud to work alongside some of the faculty that taught me how to be a great nurse and I want to continue to obtain new skills that will serve me in the classroom and community settings when educating the nursing world. With any remaining funds, I would like to attend at least 1 conference that seeks to impact the nursing profession and bring together other nurse educators seeking evidence-based teaching strategies to improve nursing education. I love working with students and educating them on the role of a professional nurse and receiving this grant will provide me with the ability to continue to do this.

Erica Blumenstock DNP, RN, CPPS

Southern Illinois University-Carbondale

I am honored to be a recipient of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Nurse Fellowship grant. I await receipt of the grant funds but plan to utilize these supplemental funds to obtain national certification and maintain membership in professional nurse organizations. I have had the honor of working as a nurse educator since 2007. For several years, I have planned on working toward obtaining the CNE certification, but I experienced financial barriers. The IBHE funds will

provide the necessary supplemental income to work toward obtaining this certification. National certification is an indicator of quality. This certification will demonstrate mastery of knowledge, skills, and abilities to demonstrate excellence in nursing education.

I am committed to lifelong learning and will use additional funds to maintain professional memberships with Sigma Theta Tau, the National League of Nursing, and the American Nurse Association. Membership in these professional organizations provides access to continuing education opportunities and advocacy opportunities for the nursing profession.

Should there be any remaining funds, I intend to allocate them to supplement my research activities at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. Currently, my research focuses on promoting the psychological well-being of nurses and nursing students. The IBHE Nurse Fellowship grant will ensure the continuity of this vital work, contributing to the development of resilient nurses and the overall improvement of the nursing profession.

Debra Penrod DNP, RN, CRRN

Southern Illinois University-Carbondale

I am honored to be a part of this initiative to support nursing faculty in the state of Illinois. I have had the privilege to teach at a relatively new nursing program at SIUC and continue to find ways to educate future nurses in our region. Prior to 2020, few options were available in southern Illinois to achieve a traditional BSN degree. I have continued to grow as a nurse educator by stretching my knowledge of teaching nursing. Through conferences and networking with other nursing faculty, new ideas have been generated that accomplish this goal and advance nursing education. The funds have supported memberships in professional organizations and present at national nursing education conferences. I continue to grow in skills to reach the 21st century learner and facilitate knowledge necessary for competent clinical practice. This financial award allowed me to concentrate on teaching nursing and performing research that impacts nursing education rather than supplementing my income by working clinically at local health care facilities. This was a real possibility until I received this award. In other words, this additional funding has helped me be successful in my career as a nurse educator which in turn impacts future nurses in this region.

Devon Bennett MSN, RN, CNL, SCRNI

Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville

During my Sophomore year of nursing school, I became a nursing tutor. Ever since then, I knew I wanted to be a teacher in some capacity. I was fortunate to get a full-time nursing faculty job right out of graduate school. Since then, I have been able to be fulfilled in the work I do day in and day out. However, due to the lack of adequate compensation for our beloved profession, I have forgone certain opportunities I would love to take advantage of. Thus, I am incredibly grateful to be chosen as a recipient of the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship. This award will allow me to attend conferences and complete a certification that will help me enhance my abilities as a Nursing Student Success Faculty Mentor, which will in turn lead to increased retention of nursing students. I plan to attend the NLN Summit, which will help me stay in touch with the latest in competency based education and help me develop ways to help my future students be successful. Further, I plan to obtain a certification that focuses on being a student success coach, which will help me help students for years to come.

Nurse Educator Fellow

Amy Kief MSN, RN

Affiliation

Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville

I am honored to be a recipient of the 2024 IBHE Nurse Educator fellowship. The funds from this fellowship are greatly appreciated and will be put forth to great use. I will use this award to improve my teaching, research, and nursing skills. I will renew my ANA, Sigma Theta Tau, and MNRS memberships and obtain new memberships to NLN and HPNA. These memberships will continue to improve my collaboration and research skills. I will also take multiple NLN and Magna courses to enhance my teaching and DEI skills. Toward the end of the year, I will take a CNE preparation course to eventually obtain my CAN. I will also take an ELNEC course to improve how I teach end-of-life care to my students. I will be attending three conferences this year. The first is the International Death, Grief, and Bereavement Conference; this will help with my dissertation and help effectively teach my students about end-of-life care. I will virtually attend Mayo Clinic's Rise for Equity conference to further my DEI initiatives within my School of Nursing. The last conference I will attend is the NLN summit; I hope to learn new and innovative ways to teach my students. With any leftover money, I plan on purchasing resources to help with writing exams and teaching critical thinking to my students.

Amy Reed PhD, RN

Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Nurse Educator fellowship award enabled significant growth and advancement in my career as a nurse educator in the following ways:

1. With my scholarship focused on health disparities among childbearing individuals and their infants, especially addressing Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), attending the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Health (AWHONN) convention in Phoenix was instrumental. This experience enriched my understanding of inclusive practices and the integration of SDOH into clinical settings, which I have already begun incorporating into a research project.

2. My research on the efficacy of simulation-based learning for improving clinical judgment in prelicensure nursing students greatly benefited from my engagement with the Society for Simulation in Healthcare (IMSH). Membership and conference participation provided access to cutting-edge simulation research and educational methodologies, enhancing my curriculum development and instructional strategies across various levels of nursing and interprofessional education.

3. An additional component of the grant was pursuing certification as a Certified Healthcare Simulation Educator (CHSE). The full-day preparation course at the IMSH conference, designed for CHSE aspirants, was crucial in refining my skills as an educator and leader and preparing me for the exam. I have registered to take the exam for certification and will complete this process early next month.

These aspects have enhanced my abilities as a researcher, facilitating my advancement on the tenure track. Additionally, the fellowship has significantly impacted my ability to bring best practices and increased knowledge to both undergraduate and graduate nursing students.

Nancy Bailey DNP-L, MS, RN

St. Francis Medical Center College of Nursing

Thank you for the honor of receiving the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship Award. The Fellowship award will allow me to increase my expertise and experiences in the nursing education field such as allowing my colleagues and I to attend the American Association of the Colleges of

Nursing's workshop "How to Create an Inclusive Learning Environment". This workshop will allow our faculty to discuss and examine our own cultural biases and knowledge to increase our cultural competence to create an inclusive learning environment for our students and staff at the College of Nursing.

This award will also allow me to participate in the National League for Nursing Faculty Intensives Online. This summer course will enhance my educational knowledge and skills to better prepare nursing students for a career in nursing in this new educational environment.

This award will also give me a chance to attend the Bournemouth University – 7th European Regional Sigma Conference, 2024. I will have the opportunity to collaborate with nurses from all over the world on current nursing, leadership, and research topics.

Finally, the award will allow me to increase my expertise in nursing leadership and ethics by attending workshops sponsored by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and the National League for Nursing. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity.

Bettianne Casper MSN, RN, CNE

St. John's College of Nursing

Being selected for an IBHE Fellowship award has been helpful in several ways. First, and most significantly, I was able to attend the Diversity Symposium hosted by AACN in New Orleans. The fellowship allowed me to participate in the conference without worrying about how I was going to pay for it, which is what typically prevents me from attending conferences throughout the year.

I chose the Diversity Symposium as my primary use of the fellowship funds because this is an area that will benefit the nursing schools and the field in central Illinois. There were several topics covered during the event that I think will be particularly useful for my work, including: bringing marginalized individual(s) to the center of learning (vs. Whiteness), considering ACEs compared to race-related stress, and incorporating social determinants of health into the classroom. I also learned that, depending on which state a nursing school is in, the term "diversity" is not allowed and has been scrubbed from college materials. Because of this, the title of the symposium is being adjusted.

With the remaining funds, I was able to purchase some student-learning materials that will encourage critical thinking in the classroom and clinical setting.

Cheryl Pope MSN, RN

St. John's College of Nursing

First and foremost, thank you for choosing me to receive the IBHE Nurse Fellowship award. It is a great honor to be selected. I plan on using the funds to grow and strengthen my commitment to the profession. The first part of the fees will be used to pay for my capstone project fees, my Regalia for graduation, and my last course fees before graduation. I will be using some funds to also, pay a with credit card that was used to purchase books and fees for college courses. This will remove some of the financial burden of graduating with my Doctoral of Nursing Practice (DNP) in August of this year. Other portions will be used to expand my education with certifications in Certified Nurse Educator (CNE), Certified Emergency Nurse (CEN), and Certified Critical Care Nurse (CCRN). The funds will be used to purchase study program books, along with actual certification exam fees. These certifications show my student's commitment to the profession and my expert knowledge. Other grant money will be used to pay my yearly membership fees to Sigma Theta Tau, the American Nurses Association, the National League of Nursing, and the Emergency Nurses Association. Some of funds will be allocated to purchase a new laptop and iPad. This will allow me

to be able to bring my iPad or computer to class and clinical post-huddle to assist the students with any questions that will arise regarding nursing diagnoses, treatment, plan of care, or general knowledge.

Karla Arnotti PhD, MSN, RN

Southwestern Illinois College-Belleville

I am very pleased to have the opportunities presented to me through the Nurse Educator Fellowship by the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Through the funding I am able to attend the 23rd Annual Nurse Educator Convention and take a mission trip with my nursing students through International Volunteer Headquarters (IVHQ).

At the conference I will enhance my learning about simulation, NCLEX updates, artificial intelligence (AI) in education, and cannabis education in nursing programs. Each of these items will allow me to be better prepared to work with nursing students in innovative and productive fashions. Competent simulation activities allow students to practice their skills in real world scenarios which is fundamental for competency-based education. Understanding the ins and outs of the changes in the NCLEX will allow me to provide more comprehensive classroom testing. Learning about AI in education is imperative to provide a learning environment that is “keeping up with the times”. Finally, developing a heightened knowledge of the guidelines on cannabis in relation to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing guidelines will help me to bridge the knowledge gap of cannabis related topics.

Being able to attend the mission trip with students is a highlight of my experiences granted through the Nurse Educator Fellowship. We will be working on a medical campaign where students will provide education and help in clinics. Working alongside my students while exploring the world and giving back to other less fortunate than us will be an invaluable experience for everyone involved.

Misty Dickey MSN, RN

Southwestern Illinois College-Belleville

My name is Misty Dickey, and I am thankful to be a recipient of the FY 24 Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Nurse Educator Fellowship Award. I am an assistant professor of nursing at a community college, where I teach mental health and advanced medical-surgical courses. I am also currently enrolled in the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) in Ethical Leadership program at McKendree University with a projected graduation date of May 2025. This fellowship award has significantly impacted my ability to remain in nursing education by providing funds necessary to support my DNP program tuition.

While healthcare leaders are attempting to manage nursing shortages and promote nurse retention, nurse educator shortages should also be addressed. Awards such as the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship help ensure Illinois maintains a sufficient number of qualified nurse educators. Nurse educators play a critical role in training the next generation of nurses, ensuring they are well-prepared to meet the demands of a complex and evolving healthcare system. Without sufficient numbers of qualified nurse educators, nursing programs may be forced to limit student enrollment, exacerbating the overall shortage of nurses. Additionally, experienced nurse educators contribute to the development of innovative teaching strategies and curricula that keep pace with advancements in medical technology and practices. Therefore, investing in the education and retention of nurse educators is essential to sustain the nursing workforce and ensure high-quality patient care in the future.

Nurse Educator Fellow

Courtenay Vihtelic, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC

Affiliation

St. Xavier University

I am incredibly grateful to be named a recipient of the FY24 Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Nurse Educator Fellowship Award. This prestigious award has empowered me to significantly enhance my teaching strategies and the pharmacology curriculum at Saint Xavier University.

The fellowship funds provided critical resources for professional development. I completed a training course to learn effective teaching practices. I acquired a Kahoot! subscription, allowing for interactive knowledge assessments and engaging all students in the learning process. Additionally, I participated in several virtual and in person conferences. These experiences have broadened my pedagogical skills and provided valuable insights into implementing innovative teaching modalities.

The real-time feedback facilitated by Kahoot! and the knowledge gleaned from the training course and the conferences have synergistically transformed my classroom into a dynamic learning environment that caters to diverse learners. This improved approach ensures active student engagement and maximizes the impact of pharmacology education.

Looking forward, I aim to leverage this experience by disseminating my findings among nursing faculty at Saint Xavier and beyond. Being on a tenure track, the fellowship serves as a springboard for sharing knowledge through national presentations and publications. I am deeply appreciative of the IBHE's investment in nursing educators like myself, as it allows us to continually improve and foster excellence in the next generation of nurses.

Tina Decker DNP, RN

Trinity Christian College

Being a recipient of the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship has directly impacted my practice as a nurse educator. This funding has provided additional opportunities for me to disseminate research findings from multiple projects that I have been collaborating on. I will be presenting research findings from an interdisciplinary disaster simulation at the 2024 ICCTE Conference- Cultivating Imagination and Hope In and Through Education, in Boston, MA. I also am presenting at the Illinois State Perinatal Educators Conference in May, 2024. I presented findings from an interdisciplinary study that used Behavioral Skills Training (BST) as a specific method to debriefing in simulations with undergraduate, prelicensure nursing students at the 2023 Critical Questions in Education Symposium. Funding will also support disseminating the findings of these studies in a peer-reviewed journal publication, allowing a stipend for summer writing. Additionally, I plan to use the remaining funds to purchase resources for preparation and testing for the CNE Nurse Educator Certification, as well as NLN membership and renewed licensure and certifications.

With the salary gap between working in clinical practice and higher education being so significant, this grant allowed for me to be able to prioritize professional development that directly benefits not only myself but also the students I teach, the other faculty I work with, and the broader nursing community through dissemination of research findings. Thank you for the support.

Pamela Smith DNP, MSN, RNC-OB

University of Illinois – Chicago

Education. I am deeply honored to have been selected as a recipient of this year's IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship. So far, I have used grant funds to invest in a Kahoot! Premium+ plan, which allows me to ask a greater variety of questions during in-class quizzing and provides insightful analytics. I love finding ways to make my classroom more interactive and exciting!

Scholarship. My research is dedicated to leveraging nursing education for meaningful clinical practice transformation. To that end, I used funds to attend the Midwest Nursing Research Society (MNRS) 48th Annual Research Conference in February, where I presented a poster on risk factors associated with shoulder dystocia. I also plan to attend the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) Annual Convention in June.

Service. One of my career goals is to equip fellow nurses with innovative tools for enhancing perinatal care. Accordingly, I intend to make my Late Preterm Infant course, a project born from my DNP studies, freely accessible. With increasing interest from hospital systems, I'm eager to expand its reach. Additionally, I plan to streamline my organizational workflow during onsite student clinicals with the purchase of an iPad mini and pencil. Remaining funds will support the renewal of my AWHONN and MNRS memberships.

Dawn Sarginson PhD, RN, CNE

University of Illinois – Chicago

I am grateful to be awarded the Nurse Educator Fellowship by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). As a nurse educator, creating interactive and engaging environments for nursing students to apply what they are learning is essential for student learning outcomes. The Nurse Educator Fellowship will provide professional development opportunities and student resources to create these environments. First, attending a conference with new information on classroom interactive engagement and technology will reinforce the self-directed, collaborative, and competency-based learning environments necessary for nursing students to learn effectively. The award will pay for the conference, travel, and lodging expenses. Additionally, money will be allocated to purchasing classroom interactive technology like Nearpod, Picmonic, and Next Gen virtual simulations to continue supporting my teaching and student learning. An iPad will be purchased for the classroom as I continue to guide the classroom with less traditional lecture and more engagement.

Furthermore, educational research and evidence-based education initiatives guide what we do as educators. NVivo Qualitative Analysis, Collaboration Cloud subscription, will assist in research initiatives with colleagues to inform nursing education. Current research interests include topics on technology, collaborative learning, engagement, and socio-emotional learning in nursing education. Membership with the Midwest Nursing Research Society will assist with the dissemination of the research. Lastly, money from the award will be allocated toward my doctoral school loan payment. I look forward to the opportunities the funds will provide while enriching my life and the lives of my students.

Amy Johnson PhD, RN

University of Illinois – Champaign

It is an honor to be an Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Fellowship awardee. Given personal financial considerations, this award allowed me to pursue professional development opportunities that have been on my work bucket list. This award provided me with the opportunity to join professional organizations, achieve certification, and attend conferences. As the BSN program director, I want to be a strong educator and role model for faculty. The funding is supporting me in achieving my nurse educator certification, which I am working on now. With this certification, I will be a nursing education leader who facilitates a curriculum of innovative teaching and learning methods. The funding also supported my attendance at the National Nurse Summit 2024. This conference improved my skill set for developing student success strategies and utilizing

ATI for student success. I took away key factors that our college can control to ensure first-time pass rates. Networking at the conference was also invaluable. Working with educators across the U.S. to improve nursing education is important. Professional memberships can be cost-prohibited but are necessary as a nurse educator. These funds allowed me to renew my American Public Health Nurses Association Membership. I have wanted to join the American Correctional Nurses Association and the National League of Nursing and this funding made it possible. This award is so appreciated and has re-energized my passion for nursing education through professional development opportunities.

Sharon Erickson MS, RN

Waubonsee Community College

Thank you to the Illinois Board of Higher Education and the Illinois Nursing Workforce Center for this generous support. I am grateful for the recognition and am honored to have been chosen as a recipient of this award. The funds from this award allowed me to attend a couple of conferences to enhance my teaching, join INACSL, and to pay tuition towards my doctoral education.

I recently attended the INACSL 2024 conference in Raleigh, North Carolina, where I was able to connect with fellow nurse educators and simulation specialists on creative ways to integrate simulation into the curriculum. My institution does not utilize simulation on a consistent basis. However, we know that simulation can be used in various ways. My hope is to try to discuss and introduce some ways to make small changes that will allow for more simulation use.

At the end of June, I will be attending the Nurse Educator Conference in the Rockies. Nurse educators are responsible for assuring students meet the requirements for safe practice. A diverse student population requires changes to how education is delivered. I am excited to learn about active learning strategies to engage my learners, which can help them navigate and be successful in the complex healthcare landscape.

Tracy Limbrunner MS, RN-BC

Waubonsee Community College

As a registered nurse since 1988, and full-time faculty member since 2010, I recently became a Board-Certified Holistic Nurse. The funds from the Nurse Educator Fellowship Grant have given me the opportunity to continue to grow and develop in the practice of holistic nursing. Thus far, I have attended a holistic nursing retreat, which was an amazing experience giving me firsthand practice with holistic techniques and modalities that I can share with my nursing faculty colleagues and students to promote self-care and resilience. I have also joined the Holistic Nursing National Organization which will increase my resources and networking opportunities. Time is often a barrier to practicing self-care, so I purchased a book for me, and my nursing faculty colleagues to learn simple self-care activities that can be easily incorporated into our classes.

Upcoming, I have the American Holistic Nurses Association Annual Conference which will expand my knowledge of holistic nursing and improve my practice of self-nurturing. Funds will also be used to attend a Nursing Educator Conference to enhance my skills as an educator and provide creative ways to teach holistic concepts to my students. My goal is to build a successful and vibrant Wellness Program for our nursing students, so that they enter the workforce equipped with self-care practices to avoid burnout and to thrive in their careers as nurses. Thank you to the Illinois Board of Higher Education for awarding me one of the 2024 Nurse Educator Fellowship Grants to make this possible.

Kaila Fox MSN, RN

Western Illinois University

I am grateful and honored to receive one of the IBHE Nurse Educator Fellowship Awards. My nursing education philosophy has revolved around experiential learning and this is where my passion for healthcare simulation stems. In my experience, simulation allows for consistent and thought-provoking, reflective experiences for our students, even when clinical availability can be challenging, specifically in our rural setting. With this fellowship, I will be able to focus the funds to enhance my knowledge, and ultimately, Western Illinois University-School of Nursing's (WIU-SON) simulation programming as a whole.

The Certified Healthcare Simulation Educator certification and Debriefing Assessment for Simulation Workshop will allow me to be certified and specialized in simulation, in turn enhancing the quality of simulation for students. Attending the Mayo Clinic Healthcare Simulation Conference 2024 will allow for networking with simulation experts. I plan to become a member of the International Nursing Association of Clinical Simulation and Learning in order to remain up to date on the latest simulation research and implement this into our simulation programming.

With the immense acquisition of knowledge from these simulation education experiences, I plan to disseminate information to my peers, and program, by creating a simulation resource for WIU-SON. This resource would benefit my colleagues from all I will learn and remain up to date with current simulation practices, thus enhancing the educational experience of our students.

I sincerely thank you for this fellowship which will allow me to further my knowledge and positively impact nursing education at WIU-SON.

Ashley Frederick, MSN, RN, CPHQ, CPPHS, NE-BC

Western Illinois University

I greatly appreciate being selected as a recipient of the IBHE Nurse Fellowship Grant for the year 2023. It is an honor to receive this award to further develop my nursing career and contribute to the field of nursing through scholarly pursuits.

This award has led me to remain in nursing education by strengthening my knowledge as a nurse educator. I had the opportunity to participate in the ATI 2024 National Nurse Educator Summit, where I gained valuable insights to improve nursing education. I plan to incorporate these learnings into my current teaching role to better prepare future nurses.

Furthermore, the allocation of funds has allowed me the opportunity to participate in the Institute for Healthcare Improvement Patient Safety Congress in Orlando, Florida. I was chosen to present my Doctor of Nursing Practice project titled "Enhancing a Patient Safety Program Utilizing Innovative Technology in a Rural Hospital". This opportunity would not have been feasible without the support of the IBHE Nurse Fellowship Grant.

Finally, I intend to allocate the remaining funds towards recertification and membership fees. Specifically, I am pursuing recertification as a Certified Professional in Patient Safety (CPPS) and Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality (CPHQ). Additionally, I am planning to pursue a new certification as a Certified Nurse Educator (CNE). This will involve investing in examination materials and preparation courses to ensure successful completion of the exam. Lastly, I plan on continuing memberships to nursing organizations such as American Nurses Association (ANA)-Illinois.

Nurse Educator Fellow

Affiliation