FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY
CHRISTINE E. LYNN COLLEGE OF NURSING

COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

FY 2025-2026









A MESSAGE FROM
DEAN CAMERON DUNCAN



At the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, Caring Science is not just a philosophy; it is the driving force behind our vision for a healthier, more compassionate world. Our five-year blueprint, Rooted in Caring, Rising in Excellence: Our Promise, guides our efforts to transform nursing education, research, practice, and service across South Florida.

This year, the nurse-led Florida Atlantic University/Northwest Community Health Alliance Community Health Center became a federally funded Federally Qualified Health Center, expanding its capacity to serve families across its Westgate and U.B. Kinsey locations. The center recorded 5,459 patient visits in 2025, reflecting its growing role as a trusted source of accessible, relationship-centered care in the community.

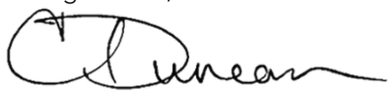
The Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center, a state-designated Memory Disorder Clinic under Florida's Department of Elder Affairs' Alzheimer's Disease Initiative, exemplifies our commitment to holistic care. We expanded enrollment in our Adult Day Center and dramatically increased support for care partners, offering guidance and encouragement to those navigating memory disorders. Our approach honors the dignity and unique needs of every individual and family, creating a community where no one walks alone.

Our vision extends far beyond clinic walls. Our students, inspired by Caring Science, actively engage in health and education fairs throughout South Florida, conducting screenings and supporting back-to-school physicals. Twice a year, teams of students and faculty journey to remote regions of Guatemala, delivering primary care to hundreds. These experiences ignite a passion for service, foster cultural understanding, and shape nurses who are ready to lead with empathy and excellence on a global stage.

None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of our advisory board, community partners, and generous donors. Your belief in our mission fuels innovation, scholarships, and life-changing experiences. You empower us to be a college that leads with heart, advances healthcare, and uplifts communities through Caring Science.

Together, we are meeting today's challenges by building a legacy of caring, excellence, and impact that will inspire generations to come. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey!

With gratitude,



Cameron G. Duncan, Ph.D., DNP, APRN, FNP-C, PMHNP-BC, CNE, FAANP
Holli Rockwell Trubinsky Eminent Dean
Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing
Florida Atlantic University

A MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT
JILLIAN BAKER



During my first year at the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, I was profoundly inspired by the unwavering dedication and generosity of its friends, alumni and community partners. Your steadfast support empowers our faculty, staff and students to elevate our mission to prepare compassionate, highly skilled nurses to new heights of excellence.

Here are a few examples of the transformational gifts from our community this year:

- $332,296 in salary and research funding for four named faculty positions
- $1,236,267 in scholarships and emergency aid for students
- $183,112 in operating support for our clinics
- $10,943 for our Simulation Clinics

Preparing this issue gave us an opportunity to reflect on the many meaningful events, milestones and collaborations that shaped the past year. Seeing them come together in these pages has been both exciting and inspiring, offering a powerful reminder of what is possible through a shared commitment to nursing education, research and care. I am immensely grateful to the alumni, donors, partners and friends whose support continues to strengthen the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing.

To learn more about our work and how philanthropy helps move it forward, please contact me at (561) 297-3511 or jillianbaker@health.fau.edu.



BUILDING THE FUTURE OF HEALTHCARE:

CHRISTINE E. LYNN ADVANCED NURSING SIMULATION CLINIC EMPOWERS 2,000 STUDENTS ANNUALLY



Christine E. Lynn, the college's namesake philanthropist, has remained a steadfast advocate of nursing education for decades. To keep pace with the latest technological advancements, Lynn generously supported the state-of-the-art expansion of the college's simulation center on Florida Atlantic's Boca Raton campus. Named in her honor, the Christine E. Lynn Advanced Nursing Simulation Clinic benefits 2,000 nursing students each year, providing opportunities to apply classroom lessons in risk-free, real-life settings.

The new Boca Raton clinic, which opened in September 2025, features cutting-edge technologies and specialty units, including an emergency department bay with cots and high-fidelity mannequins, an Intensive Care Unit, medical-surgical suites, a labor and delivery room with a newborn stabilization unit, a birthing bed with a high-fidelity labor/delivery mannequin, a pediatric unit, and a home health and hospice room. In addition, the Boca Raton clinic has upgraded its infrastructure with advanced recording systems, enabling faculty to review simulation sessions and provide valuable feedback.

> *"More than ever, nursing students must be prepared for the rapid innovations taking place in healthcare settings and hospital systems."*
>
> *Christine E. Lynn*

"It is my hope that this innovative clinic will help transform nursing education and give students the necessary high-tech and high-touch skills to improve patient outcomes in their future nursing careers," Lynn stated. "Undergraduate and graduate students will be able to practice essential skills like patient assessment, emergency care and obstetrics in a safe, but true-to-life clinical training environment."

The College of Nursing also provides students with hands-on training in a simulation lab on the Davie campus. In 2023, the Advanced Nursing Simulation and Clinical Learning Laboratory underwent significant renovations made possible through generous philanthropic support. The upgraded facility now features new high-fidelity simulators that offer immersive, hands-on training across a range of real-world clinical scenarios.

Like the Boca Raton lab, the Davie facility has also upgraded its infrastructure with enhanced audio-visual systems. Replacing existing cameras with higher-quality equipment has improved both audio and video clarity during simulations, further enhancing students' learning experiences.

As the College of Nursing expands to Florida Atlantic's Jupiter campus and prepares for its first cohort of students in fall 2027, plans are underway to develop a new simulation lab to support this growing academic footprint. The facility will serve students enrolled in the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ABSN) tracks, providing advanced, hands-on clinical learning experiences in a state-of-the-art environment.

















LOUIS AND ANNE GREEN MEMORY AND WELLNESS CENTER

MARKS 25 YEARS OF SUPPORTING FAMILIES

For 25 years, the Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center at Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing has served as a lifeline for families navigating Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, providing specialized care, education and support throughout the community. The milestone was celebrated this spring during an open house that welcomed families, supporters and community partners to the center. Attendees toured the recently updated Adult Day Center and learned about new enhancements, including a Montessori-inspired curriculum designed to promote independence and engagement among participants.

As a state-designated memory disorder clinic, the center offers a comprehensive range of services for individuals living with memory disorders and the people who care for them. Services include comprehensive memory and wellness evaluations, neuropsychological testing, cognition-based driver evaluations, psychotherapy and counseling, care planning, education and support groups. Among its most impactful programs is the Adult Day Care Center, which provides cognitive, physical and social stimulation in a safe and supportive environment.



Participants engage in a variety of activities throughout the day, including reminiscence therapy, hand-eye coordination exercises, painting classes, chair aerobics, chair dancing, drumming, live music and educational presentations. Special events bring additional enrichment, from visits by miniature ponies and therapy dogs to interactive robotic cats that purr as part of the center's animal therapy program.

"We focus on meeting each person where they are and creating opportunities for meaningful engagement throughout the day," said Alice W. Brumley, DNP, APRN, AGPCNP-BC, director of the Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center. "Whether someone is sorting objects, playing basketball, participating in an art activity or enjoying music, these experiences help maintain abilities, promote confidence and support quality of life."

For many families, the program offers far more than daytime activities. Adult day care services provide care partners with time to work, attend appointments or simply rest while knowing their loved one is in a safe environment. The program can also help individuals remain in their homes longer, delaying or preventing the need for more costly long-term care options.

The center's impact is strengthened by the ongoing support of the Caring Hearts Auxiliary, a volunteer organization dedicated to raising funds and awareness for the Memory and Wellness Center. Through scholarships and fundraising efforts, the auxiliary helps make adult day care services more accessible to local families.

Additional support from the Boca Raton Regional Hospital Foundation and other community donors helps fund scholarships that allow participants to continue receiving services. The center also offers a variety of no-cost programs, including educational opportunities and support groups for care partners, both in-person and virtually.

"As part of the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, the Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center plays a vital role in advancing compassionate, person-centered care," said Cameron Duncan, dean of the college. "Celebrating 25 years of service is a testament to the center's lasting impact on families throughout our community. The MWC also serves as an invaluable learning environment for our nursing students, providing opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and compassion needed to care for older adults and support their care partners."

This year also marks another milestone for the center and its supporters. The Caring Hearts Auxiliary will host the 20th annual "Keep Memories Alive" Walk-in-the-Mall this November at the Town Center in Boca Raton. The event, which has become a community tradition, raises funds for Adult Day Care Center scholarships and helps ensure families continue to have access to critical services for years to come.













FLORIDA ATLANTIC COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

EXPANDS ACCESS TO FAMILY HEALTHCARE IN WEST PALM BEACH

Florida Atlantic University's nurse-led community clinics are expanding access to comprehensive family health services in West Palm Beach by providing primary care, preventive services and community outreach.



The Florida Atlantic University Northwest Community Health Alliance (FAU/NCHA) Community Health Center, now a federally funded Federally Qualified Health Center, operates two locations in West Palm Beach: the U.B. Kinsey Educational and Community Center and the Westgate Community Health Center adjacent to Westgate Elementary School.

"For many working adults and families, convenience can make the difference between getting care and putting it off," said Cameron Duncan, dean of the College of Nursing and CEO of FAU/NCHA. "Our clinics offer same-day appointments and bring pediatric and primary care, mental health services and laboratory testing together under one roof, making it easier for patients to receive the services they need for themselves and their families in a single visit."

The clinics provide comprehensive, family-centered services for children, adults and older adults. Services include immunizations; management of diabetes and high blood pressure; school, sports and pre-employment physicals; foster care physicals; disability confirmation visits; vision and hearing screenings; and laboratory testing, including cholesterol and HIV screenings.

"Every patient visit represents a direct impact on a person or family in our community," said Monica Cleckley, DNP, director of the Community Health Center. "Whether we are helping someone manage a chronic condition, preparing a child for school, or identifying a health concern early, our goal is to provide care that improves health today and helps prevent more serious problems in the future."



In 2025, the FAU/NCHA recorded 5,459 patient visits, including a record 542 patients served in October alone. Services were provided at both clinic locations as well as through outreach efforts at Harmony House and Vita Nova. Throughout the year, clinic staff participated in community events by offering immunizations, blood pressure checks, mental health screenings and health education.

The team also provides weekly outreach at St. Patrick's Episcopal Church and hosted its first Back-to-School Community Health and Resource Fair on Aug. 8 in partnership with TLC Learning Center, Tabernacle Church, Bridges at West Palm Beach and the West Palm Beach Fire Department.

$1.5M GIFT ADVANCES

HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE NURSING EDUCATION

The Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing received a $1.5 million gift from Mark Bruce Swillinger in memory of his wife, Marilyn Lee Swillinger, to establish an endowed professorship in hospice and palliative care nursing last fall. The Mark Bruce and Marilyn Lee Swillinger Endowed Professor will provide students with tailored instruction and guidance in these two specialized fields of care throughout their nursing education. Additional gifts totaling $300,000 name the dean's conference room for Marilyn Lee Swillinger and the collaborative classroom for Mark and Marilyn together.

The endowed professorship will ensure hospice and palliative care are incorporated across the college's academic programs and support the development of clinical experiences in these specialized care settings. The need for hospice and palliative care is especially acute in Florida, where more than 21% of residents are age 65 or older, and that share is projected to reach 27% by 2030.



"With this gift, I wanted to honor Marilyn's memory and show our gratitude to a community that has supported us so deeply," said Mark Swillinger. "The compassionate care we received from hospice made a tremendous difference for both Marilyn and me. Expanding access to comprehensive palliative and hospice training will enable tomorrow's healthcare workers to better address the growing need for these critical services and deliver much-needed emotional and physical support within our community."

Marilyn Lee Swillinger passed away on Oct. 30, 2023, after a two-year battle with lung cancer. She was a committed advocate for healthcare, the arts and expanded educational opportunities. Marilyn was a founding member of the College of Nursing's advisory board in 2012 and remained a longtime member. In 2025, she was posthumously named an emerita advisory board member. She also strongly supported other Florida Atlantic colleges and departments, along with numerous local charitable organizations.

The Mark Bruce and Marilyn Lee Swillinger Endowed Professorship in Hospice and Palliative Care Nursing will provide support in perpetuity for a professor with expertise in these fields. The professor will lead the integration of hospice and palliative care throughout the undergraduate curriculum, including academics, simulation, clinical training and preparation for certification at all levels of hospice and palliative care. The role will also introduce students to these specialties early in their academic careers and prepare them for rewarding careers in these essential areas of nursing.

ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIPS HELP SHAPE

THE NEXT GENERATION OF NURSING LEADERS

At the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, endowed professorships and chairs play a critical role in advancing nursing education, research and innovation at a time when colleges and universities across the country face an ongoing shortage of Ph.D.-prepared nursing faculty.

While many assume the national nursing shortage is driven by a lack of student interest, nursing programs across the country continue to see strong demand from qualified applicants. Barriers to accepting all students who apply include a limited number of doctoral-prepared faculty, limited availability of clinical placements, and a shortage of the other educational resources needed to train the next generation of nurses.

"Endowed professorships provide long-term support that strengthens a college's ability to attract distinguished scholars, expand research initiatives and sustain academic excellence for generations to come. These funds create a permanent source of income that supports faculty leadership, scholarly work and innovation while enhancing the reputation and impact of both the college and the faculty members who hold these prestigious appointments."

Cameron Duncan, Dean of Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing

Competition for experienced nursing professors and researchers has intensified nationwide, making it increasingly difficult for academic institutions to recruit and retain top talent.

At the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, endowed positions help it compete nationally for leading nurse scientists, educators and researchers whose work shapes the future of healthcare.



Most recently, the college named Candy Wilson, Ph.D., associate dean for research and scholarship, as the inaugural holder of the Dr. Elizabeth E. Force Chair for Healthcare Research.

The endowed chair recognizes Wilson's leadership in advancing the college's research mission and strengthening its growing scholarly impact. The position was established through the estate of Elizabeth E. Force, whose gift was specifically designated to support the college's associate dean for research.

Force enjoyed a distinguished career as a biomedical researcher in the pharmaceutical industry and developed a close connection to the college after attending faculty research presentations at Abbey Delray South, where she was a resident. Inspired by the work of the college's faculty and the relationships she formed with nursing researchers and leadership, she became a dedicated supporter of the college and volunteered as a judge for faculty and student research poster presentations.



Her passion for healthcare research and meaningful community engagement ultimately led her to establish a legacy that will continue supporting nursing scholarship and innovation well into the future.

"I feel deeply honored to be associated with Dr. Elizabeth Force's name and legacy," Wilson said. "Her commitment to healthcare research and her engagement with our college speak to a remarkable vision. It is a privilege to carry forward Dr. Force's legacy while continuing to advance the college's strong tradition of research excellence and scholarly impact."

Through endowed chairs and professorships like the Dr. Elizabeth E. Force Chair for Healthcare Research, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing continues to invest in the future of nursing education and research while creating lasting opportunities for faculty, students and the communities they serve.



IN CARING COMPANY

MOMENTS FROM EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



2026 Hall of Fame and Distinguished Alumni Award Ceremony and Reception. Dean Cameron Duncan and Melissa Emerson.



2026 Lamplighter Reception. Joe Trubinsky, Holli Rockwell Trubinsky, Christine E Lynn, Dean Cameron Duncan, Terry Fedele, Helen Ballerano, Cindy Krebsbach, Melissa Emerson.



Construction Kickoff of the Kurt & Marilyn Wallach Holocaust and Jewish Studies Building. Francesca Daniel and Christine E. Lynn.



Spring 2026 Pinning Ceremony. Christine E. Lynn and Owlsley.



Go Pink Luncheon. Table featuring Pat Thomas, Christine E. Lynn, Joan Wargo, Anne Green, Terry Fedele, Barb Schmidt.



2026 Spring Graduation. Mark Swillinger, Christine E. Lynn, Jean Seaver.



Horizon Society Luncheon. Mark Swillinger and Barbara Sharaf.



Go Pink Luncheon. Joan Wargo and Carrie Rubin.



Horizon Society Luncheon. Dr. Marilyn "Dee" Ray and Dean Cameron Duncan.



Horizon Society Luncheon. President Adam Hasner, Holli Rockwell Trubinsky, Joe Trubinsky, and First Lady Jillian Hasner.



Horizon Society Luncheon. David Kurlander, Dean Cameron Duncan, and Mark Swillinger.



Boca Raton Regional Hospital Annual Ball. Guest, Pat Thomas, Terry Fedele, Christine E. Lynn, Barb Schmidt.



Kay Carpenter Scholarship Pinning Ceremony. Connie Siskowski, B.G. Carter, and Karen Carter.



Soirée 65. Sharon Kusuke, Dick Schmidt, Christine E. Lynn.



Soirée 65. Holli Rockwell Trubinsky and Joe Trubinsky.



Grand Opening of the Christine E. Lynn Advanced Nursing Simulation Clinic. Barry Siegal and Guest.



Soirée 65. Sherri and Brian Blechman.



Soirée 65. Michael Brody, Susan Brody, Holli Rockwell Trubinsky and Joe Trubinsky.



2026 Lamplighter Scholarship Reception. Mark Swillinger, Dean Cameron Duncan, and Barbara Sharaf.



Boca Raton Regional Hospital Annual Ball. Guest, Terry Fedele, and Melissa Durbin.



Transcend Tomorrow Campaign Celebration. President Adam Hasner, Ann Wood, Barbara Sharaf, and Mark Swillinger.



Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center Open House Celebrating 25 Years of Service. Pat Thomas, Holli Rockwell Trubinsky, Joe Trubinsky, Terry Fedele, and Guest.



2026 Hall of Fame and Distinguished Alumni Award Ceremony and Reception. First Lady Jillian Hasner, Melissa Emerson, and President Adam Hasner.



Spring 2026 Pinning Ceremony. Jeaneen Muller, Jean Seaver, Marva Harris, Owlsley, and Rachel Huerta.



Boca Raton Regional Hospital Annual Ball. Mark Larkin, Guest, Lincoln Mendez, and Guest.



Boca Raton Regional Hospital Annual Ball. Melissa Durbin.

BRINGING COMPASSIONATE CARE

TO GUATEMALA

Each year, nurse practitioner students from Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing travel to rural Guatemala, where they provide essential healthcare while gaining transformative clinical and cultural experiences that shape them into compassionate, globally-minded providers.

Through a longstanding partnership with Nursing Heart, Inc., a nurse-led community health organization serving rural and Indigenous populations, the Guatemala program gives students the opportunity to experience nursing beyond the classroom while expanding access to primary and women's healthcare in underserved communities.

Founded on the belief that all people deserve access to dignified healthcare, Nursing Heart works to ensure families in Guatemala receive preventative care from medical professionals who treat them with empathy and kindness.

The program is open to students in the Family Nurse Practitioner, Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator programs through Florida Atlantic's Study Abroad Program. Faculty and students travel to Guatemala twice each year, in February and November.

"These experiences challenge students to think beyond traditional clinical settings," said Assistant Professor Nancy Harris, DNP, APRN, ANP-BC, FAANP, who leads the program. "They return with stronger clinical skills, greater cultural awareness and a deeper appreciation for the power of compassionate care."

In November 2025, nursing students and faculty worked in the villages of Los Jometes and San Martin Jilotepeque. The team cared for more than 500 primary care patients and nearly 75 women through cancer screening services. One patient with atypical cervical cells received onsite thermal ablation treatment to destroy precancerous cells.

During the February 2026 trip, nine nurse practitioner students, accompanied by faculty, provided care in the communities of San Juan Alotenango and Los Jometes, Chimaltenango. The team cared for 121 patients in the general clinic and 26 patients in the women's clinic, including one thermal ablation procedure to treat a precancerous cervical lesion. In Los Jometes, they cared for 199 patients in the general clinic and 39 patients in the women's clinic.



















"Guatemala gives our students the opportunity to see the impact they can make as advanced practice nurses. They return not only with stronger clinical skills, but with a renewed sense of purpose and a deeper commitment to serving others."

Nancy Harris, Assistant Professor











CONNECTING NURSING ALUMNI

THROUGH CARING AND COMMUNITY

Building meaningful, lasting relationships with alumni is at the heart of Jeaneen Muller's work at Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing. As assistant director of alumni relations and community engagement, Muller works closely with graduates, students, faculty, and community partners to create opportunities that keep alumni involved with the college and one another.

"We want alumni to know they always have a place here," Muller said. "Whether they're reconnecting with classmates, mentoring students, or participating in events, those relationships continue long after graduation."

Muller works closely with the Nursing Professionals Alumni Network and Florida Atlantic's Alumni and Community Engagement team to create experiences that keep graduates informed and engaged in the life of the college. Alumni participate in continuing education programs, networking mixers, tailgates, community service events, and a variety of initiatives that support nursing education and practice.

Many alumni also support current students by serving as preceptors, mentoring future nurses, speaking in classes, and participating in milestone events such as Pinning and White Coat ceremonies. These experiences bring students and alumni together while reinforcing the college's culture of caring.

For Rachel Huerta, MSN '11, BSN '07, alumni involvement is an opportunity to remain part of a profession and community that continues to shape future generations of nurses.

"As nursing graduates, we are part of a distinguished community united by compassion, leadership, service, and commitment to Caring Science," said Huerta, a board member for Florida Atlantic's Alumni Association. "The connections we built during our time at Florida Atlantic created a lifelong network of professionals dedicated to making a difference in the lives of others."

Huerta said the Florida Atlantic Alumni Association gives graduates opportunities to support initiatives that strengthen nursing education and the profession as a whole.

"Alumni bring invaluable experience and perspective to our students," Muller said. "Their involvement helps strengthen the supportive community that defines the college."

The Nursing Professionals Alumni Network is free to join and offers graduates opportunities to remain involved with the college throughout their lives.

To learn more about the Nursing Professionals Alumni Network and ways to stay involved, visit community.faualumni.org/topics or contact NurAlumni@health.fau.edu.





Rachel Huerta, MSN '11, BSN '07 Alumni Association Board Member







"As nursing alumni, our collective experiences, knowledge, and support are invaluable to the next generation of nurses. Whether you recently graduated or have been in practice for many years, your voice and participation matter. Together, we can continue to inspire, support, and elevate one another while making a lasting impact on healthcare and the communities we serve."

CARE GRANT LEAVES A LASTING LEGACY

IN COMMUNITY HEALTH

After nearly four years of expanding access to care and preparing future nursing leaders, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing is celebrating the impact of the $3.9 million federally funded grant, the Caring-based Community & Academic Relationships for Excellence (CARE): Nurse-led Mobile Health Unit.

Awarded by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in 2022, the grant was designed to increase access to primary care, behavioral health services, and preventive health education while strengthening the nursing workforce through community-based clinical education. Through the grant, 240 Florida Atlantic graduate and undergraduate nursing students gained hands-on experience serving rural and under-resourced communities across Palm Beach County while working alongside the FAU/NCHA clinical staff, faculty and community partners to address health inequities.

A portion of the grant's outreach occurred in the Glades communities, where students participated in more than 40 health education and screening events in partnership with local organizations, schools, churches and civic leaders. They also completed community health assessments and developed service-learning projects addressing topics such as heart health, diabetes management, dementia prevention, healthy aging, stress reduction and mental wellness.

"The CARE grant created meaningful opportunities for our students to learn by serving communities where access to care is often limited. These experiences prepared them to practice with compassion and competence while serving as community-focused nurse leaders."

Beth King, Ph.D., APRN, PMHCNS-BC, PMHNP-BC, FAAN, Professor

"Working in the Glades gives students the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges many families face in accessing healthcare," said Lisa Kirk Wiese, Ph.D., MSN, RN, GERO-BC, PHNA-BC, CNE, FGSA, FAAN. "These communities benefit from sustained access to health education, screenings and preventive resources. The trust developed through this work has created a strong community-academic partnership that will continue well beyond the grant."

The CARE grant also expanded learning opportunities in communities throughout the West Palm Beach area. Students worked with community partners serving survivors of domestic violence, veterans, individuals experiencing homelessness, children and families, and residents of low-income housing.

In collaboration with interdisciplinary healthcare teams, students participated in medication management, health physicals, telehealth visits, mental health screenings and evaluations, patient education and care coordination.

For Goece Charles, RN, a community health nurse and BSN preceptor, one of the program's greatest strengths was showing students what nursing looks like beyond the bedside.

"The grant allowed students to experience nursing in the places where people live, work and seek support," Charles said. "They learned that improving health means more than treating illness; it requires building relationships, understanding community needs, and connecting people with resources that can improve their lives."

As the CARE grant concludes, its impact will continue through the hundreds of students who gained community-based clinical experience and the partnerships established throughout Palm Beach County.











PALM BEACH HEALTH NETWORK RE-ESTABLISHES NURSING SCHOLARSHIPS

THROUGH STATE MATCHING PROGRAM

In spring 2026, Palm Beach Health Network (PBHN) re-established its scholarship program to support undergraduate nursing students at the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing with $10,000 scholarships. By leveraging the State of Florida's Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) 1:1 matching program, the initiative effectively doubles the impact of each contribution and expands support for future nurses entering the workforce.

"This is one of several similar scholarships the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing has with hospital systems that provide critical financial aid for students and help build an employment pipeline with our clinical partners," said Dean Cameron Duncan.

Through this partnership, the scholarship will ultimately benefit 20 students completing externships across Palm Beach Health Network facilities. In return, recipients commit to two years of employment with PBHN following graduation and successful licensure, strengthening the pipeline between academic preparation and clinical practice.

"This partnership reflects our ongoing commitment to investing in the next generation of nurses who will serve our communities with skill and compassion," said Ricky Ramirez, MSN, RN, CCRN-K, CENP, NEA-BC, chief nursing officer for West Boca Medical Center and Palm Beach Health Network. "By supporting students during their training and welcoming them into our health system upon graduation, we are building a stronger, more sustainable nursing workforce."

The State of Florida LINE program presents a unique opportunity for healthcare organizations to double their gift and make a significant impact on undergraduate nursing education at the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing.



SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT

FUELS A NURSING DREAM

Receiving support from the William and Helen Thomas Nursing Scholarship Fund and the Evelyn Weinberger Nursing Scholarship Fund helped Freshman Direct Admit BSN student Caroline Baker pursue her dream of becoming a nurse.



"Their assistance arrived when I most needed it," she said, adding that receiving the scholarships has had a tremendous impact on her life.

Financially, the funding helped relieve some of the stress that comes with pursuing a demanding degree, allowing her to focus on her studies and clinical training. "Personally, the support reminded me that there are people who genuinely believe in students like me and want to invest in our futures," Caroline shared. That encouragement has motivated her to continue working hard and striving academically.

She said she always admired the compassion, resilience, and knowledge nurses bring to patient care: "I want nothing more than to be that light and helping hand in someone's life."

"Choosing the College of Nursing has been by far the best decision I have made for myself," said Caroline, adding that the journey has been both challenging and rewarding. The program has pushed her academically and personally, helping her develop critical thinking skills, confidence, and discipline.

"There have been moments of exhaustion and self-doubt, but each challenge has strengthened my commitment to becoming a nurse and serving others with empathy and dedication," she added. Caroline is passionate about women's health and hopes to become a labor and delivery (L&D) nurse after graduating and completing her certification.

"I am drawn to the opportunity to support mothers and families during one of the most meaningful moments of their lives," she shared, adding that L&D nurses balance compassion, advocacy, and critical thinking every day. "My goal is to become an L&D nurse who provides safe, patient-centered care while helping families feel empowered throughout the birthing experience."

An obstetrics clinical rotation solidified her career goals. Watching nurses advocate for patients, provide reassurance during emotional moments, and help bring new life into the world was incredibly inspiring.

"Through clinical experiences, coursework, and the support of faculty and peers, I've grown tremendously and become more certain that nursing is the right path for me," Caroline shared.

As she continues working toward her goal of becoming a registered nurse, Caroline remains grateful for the support she received through scholarship funding.

"This support provides more than financial assistance — it gives students encouragement, opportunity, and reassurance that others believe in their potential."

SHERRI BLECHMAN BRINGS A LIFETIME OF CARING

TO THE ADVISORY BOARD



As one of the newest members of the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing's Advisory Board, Sherri L. Blechman, RN, MSN, MA, brings more than 40 years of experience in community health, geriatric care management, psychiatric nursing and health communication. A Certified Dementia Practitioner, she is deeply committed to patient advocacy, education, and connecting individuals and families with the resources needed to support healing, resilience and well-being.

Blechman earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Massachusetts, a Master of Science in Nursing in Community Health and Education from Salem State College and a Master of Arts in Health Communication from Emerson College. She is a member of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing and Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society.

Her career reflects a deep dedication to both clinical care and community education. She served as a family nurse consultant with Alzheimer's Community Care, providing education, advocacy and support to individuals and families impacted by Alzheimer's disease. Building on this foundation of family-centered care, Blechman joined MorseLife Health System as a Nurse Care Manager, where she collaborated closely with social workers to support seniors and families navigating complex healthcare needs.

Earlier in her career, Blechman practiced at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston as a clinical nurse on the mental health unit and as a nurse educator in the Patient and Family Learning Center. She also created and hosted the award-winning public access television program Health Talk, which featured hospital experts discussing key health topics and engaging viewers through call-in participation. In addition, she volunteered with the American Cancer Society, supporting education, fundraising and special event initiatives.

Her ongoing community engagement includes volunteer service with the Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center; Boca Ballet Theatre's Parkinson's disease initiatives; the Boca Raton Regional Hospital Go Pink Luncheon and Hospital Ball committees; the Jewish Federation of South Palm Beach County, where she serves on the Women's Philanthropy Board; and the Sandler School of Social Work Community Leadership Committee.

As an advisory board member, Blechman hopes to support the college's mission and educational initiatives by collaborating with fellow board members, faculty, students, alumni and community partners. By sharing her experience and expertise, she aims to advocate for the evolving needs of students and the nursing profession.

"My vision is to promote the continued growth of the College of Nursing and the advancement of Caring Science to support the next generation of nursing leaders," Blechman said.

JOIN US IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NURSING

So much of the work highlighted in this report is supported by the generosity of our community – friends, alumni, and partners – who have supported the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing with their time, talents and philanthropic giving. Everything from a monthly recurring donation to a legacy contribution makes a tremendous impact on our students, faculty, staff and the communities we serve.

To continue our work and grow our impact, we are seeking support in a few key areas:

The FAU/NCHA Community Health Center Clinic and Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center: Directly contribute to community care and healthcare access with a gift to our clinics to offset program costs or provide an Adult Day Center scholarship.

Jupiter Simulation Lab: Support the college's expansion to Jupiter by helping finish construction and renovation of the new simulation lab. Naming opportunities are available.

Student Scholarships: Help our graduate and undergraduate students achieve their career goals and improve healthcare in the community by reducing financial barriers to graduation.

Endowed Professorships and Research Funding: This funding supports the critical research our faculty engages in, and it helps the college recruit and retain top scholars that further strengthen our students' education.

To learn more about these priorities or other opportunities to support our work, including remembering us in your estate plans, please contact Jillian Baker at (561) 297-3511 or jillianbaker@health.fau.edu.



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