Grant and Scholarship Testimonials

How Your Donation Helps...

Charlotte McGuire Scholarship Recipients
2016 Graduate Charlotte McGuire Scholarship Recipient Justin Behnke

I am truly grateful to have received the 2016 Charlotte Graduate McGuire Scholarship Award on behalf of the American Holistic Nurses Association. I will use this scholarship to help complete my Master’s degree in Advanced Holistic Nursing at Florida Atlantic University next fall. I’m truly pleased and privileged to been awarded this scholarship on behalf of the American Holistic Nurses Association. It is truly an honor to represent my organization St. John Providence Health in Detroit with my continued hard work and perseverance in our profession and as a board certified holistic nurse.

With loving kindness,
Justin Behnke RN, BSN HN-BC

2016 Undergraduate Charlotte McGuire Scholarship Recipient Shannon Schueler

My heart is filled with gratitude. I am honored and humbled to be the 2016 recipient of the Charlotte McGuire Undergraduate Scholarship. My journey into nursing was inspired solely by my goal of becoming a holistic nurse. The American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) feels like an extended family to me, and I appreciate the continued support. This year I was able to attend the 2016 AHNA conference and receive the award in person. While there, I felt an energetic interconnectedness with the holistic nursing community that reinforced the inspiration to continue on my path.
The funds from the Charlotte McGuire Scholarship will help me to pursue my goals of becoming a board-certified holistic nurse and certified medical yoga therapist in 2017. By achieving these goals, I will be even more qualified to support the spiritual, mental/emotional, intellectual, energetic, and physical wellness of all of the people that I encounter in my professional nursing career. Many thanks to all of my teachers, past and present. Thank you, AHNA. Peace.

2015 Undergraduate Charlotte McGuire Scholarship Recipient Anabela Santos

I am sincerely honored to be selected as the recipient of the 2015 Charlotte McGuire Undergraduate Scholarship. Receiving this award has been a true blessing in my life. Thank you AHNA, for reminding my spirit to rejoice in the synchronicity of life.

When I began my BSN studies at Pacific College of Oriental Medicine (PCOM), I never imagined how financially challenging it can be to return to school. The added cost of academia became a huge stressor. The generosity of this award alleviated some of that burden and in turn inspired the goal of persisting with holistic studies.

The timing of this award has also been remarkable. As I embark on my last semester at PCOM, the fear of the unknown has knocked at my door. This award confidently opens the door to my holistic journey in a deeply meaningful way.

I will maintain the intention to transform my body, mind, and spirit, as the evolution of my purpose progresses. Alas, my traverse into holistic nursing continues to be validated. With this award, I will devote my future to learning how I may better care for myself and serve others on the path to complete well-being.

Anabela Santos

2014 Charlotte McGuire Graduate Scholarship
Justin J. Carpenter MSN, RN, HN-BC, AGCNS-BC, Caritas Coach

Holistic nursing – and the desire to learn more, research and teach about it – was my inspiration for going to back to school to obtain my Masters of Science in Nursing from Eastern Michigan University. Being the sole “bread-winner” in my family, it was financially challenging at times to follow this dream. Through many small (and not-so-small miracles) I was able to complete my studies. Receiving the Graduate Charlotte McGuire Scholarship in 2014 was one of those not-so-small miracles that really helped alleviate some of the financial burden I was experiencing. I was able to put that money toward tuition which helped me and my family tremendously. This allowed me to focus on the more important task of finishing school.

Since graduating, I have taken the role of clinical nurse specialist for the ICU division at my hospital. I have been able to use my knowledge and skills learned from my degree to help guide several staff members in researching and implementing holistic modalities such as aromatherapy and music therapy into their nursing practice. I have also been asked to assist in developing a holistic nursing training program for the nurses in my health system. This has truly been a blessing and an amazing experience. Thank you AHNA!

When I received the letter in the mail informing me that I was selected as the 2013 Charlotte McGuire Scholarship recipient, I opened it, read it and jumped up and down and burst into tears. I was overwhelmed with gratitude.

I am deeply honored to be chosen as the 2013 Charlotte McGuire Scholarship recipient. As a person who has been committed to complimentary and alternative therapies for quite some time, I considered Nursing school as an avenue to deliver new methods of healing to patients.

Now that I have completed the first half of the RN program at Minneapolis Community and Technical College, I know that I have made the right choice. I have learned so much about the strength of being present for a patient and meeting their needs in a holistic manner.
I see now that nursing is not only a career, but a lifestyle. I feel blessed that I am able to share holistic care with patients and touch their lives, as each of them touches mine. I have so much appreciation for my instructors at Minneapolis Community and Technical College, as they teach nursing in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

The scholarship award money that I have received from the AHNA will help with my tuition and bring me closer to my goal of becoming a Board Certified Holistic Nurse. Thank you for your contribution to me and please know that your generosity will be paid forward.

Shannon Dickson Schueler

I am the 2011 Charlotte McGuire Scholarship recipient and I am honored to take a moment to reflect on how this award has made my personal and educational life easier.

I made the decision to return to school in 2009. At that time, I was a 45 year woman, full time nurse, mother of a teenage daughter, step-mom to two young adult sons and a full time wife! My plate was full and my cup was running over. Although life was good I felt "something" was stirring deep inside me. I found myself at an integrative medicine symposium (at that time I had no idea what "integrative" and medicine had in common) listening to two New York University (NYU) graduate students talking about this great organization called American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA). I was intrigued, did some research and my journey started. I was amazed that what I always "knew", always "felt" and always practiced had an organization full of nurses just like me! I joined right away!

Shortly after becoming a member, I started school at NYU. It was an expectation of the holistic primary care professors that we belong to AHNA. I was so proud to say that I already belonged and was enjoying the publications, the articles, the website and the voice of holistic practitioners. The learning at NYU was challenging, stimulating, expensive and time consuming. As my clinical rotations started, I realized that I would not be able to continue full time employment. Although my family was supportive, I was very
concerned about our finances. I was struggling with my travel expenses and buying my books when I came across the AHNA Charlotte McGuire Scholarship. I applied and was awarded this scholarship just in the nick of time! I was able to purchase books and a metro pass for one semester which took some of the burden off my family. Thanks for all the support, both emotionally and financially.

Sincerely and in peace,

Tracey A. Gilhuly, RN, BSN

In 2010, I was one of the recipients of the Charlotte McGuire Scholarship award to assist me in pursuing my graduate studies in Holistic Nursing. I was very excited and felt honored that I was chosen by the American Holistic Nurses Association to receive such a wonderful award.

I have wanted to pursue my nursing education for quite some time, however at the time my children were young and my family was my priority. Now that my children have grown and are themselves attending college, I felt it was time for me to resume my pursuit of my graduate education in Advanced Holistic Nursing through Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida. However, the additional expense of putting our own children through college and me through a graduate degree in today’s economy is quite a financial burden on me and my husband. I work full time and attend school part time. Having been awarded the scholarship gave me the incentive and affirmed for me that I was on the right path.

I have applied the award towards my graduate courses and I am continuing my studies as we speak. I hope to complete my Masters degree in Advanced Holistic Nursing by 2013. Thank you again for your generosity.

In Gratitude,

Aleida Drozdowicz, RN, BSN, HNB-BC, HTCP/HTCI

The Gift of the Charlotte McGuire Scholarship

Kim Santamaria MS RN
How often in our lives do we create a plan and then all of a sudden the Greater Power says “I have a different plan for you,” challenging us to grow and change.

On March 3, 2009 I applied for the Charlotte McGuire Scholarship through the AHNA as I had been accepted to the Masters in Nursing Education program at Roberts Wesleyan College (RWC). My anticipated start date was August 2009. At the time I was working as the Energy nurse at Clifton Springs Hospital, it was an exciting position that allowed me to do energy work in the ICU, PACU, telemetry and the other floors as well. Truly I felt this job was nursing at its greatest level.

On March 6, I was told by the CEO that the hospital was making cut backs and my position would be eliminated as of March 8th. All I could think about was that I probably would not be going to school in the fall and that I had to quickly find a job. But when I called RWC, I found that I would be eligible for a grant if I started school right away, in March. The RWC advisor said the amount granted would just about get me through September and by then I could apply for student loans. I was in shock as I got off the phone and turned to my office mate, the Chaplain, and said “I guess God wants me to go to school now instead of August.” With that the new adventure started and I started work on my Masters on March 25, 2009.

In June I received a call from my old boss, she called to offer me congratulations on winning the Charlotte McGuire scholarship, she had read it in the newsletter that had just arrived. I was thrilled and later when the check came I took right to RWC to put it towards my tuition. That check gave me the needed bit to get me through to September when my student loans could kick in. Truly a gift from the AHNA and Charlotte McGuire as I believe her quest was being worked on.

In March 2010, I started a new position at the local Veterans Administration Medical Ceter (VAMC) as a night patient care coordinator. My schooling was so instrumental in this position, it allowed new vision and scope in my practice. The nurse executive was open to a more holistic approach and encouraged my work in that realm as well. The staff quickly came to know that I offered other skills such as guided imagery and energy work. It was not long before I would get a call asking me to come and work with an end of life Veteran or someone in rehab having anxiety or disturbing thoughts.
During this time I continued work on my graduate project to create a program for Healing the Wounded Healer Nurse, a program that would help the nurse lift off the old burdens that prevent her/him from being totally present to the patient. As part of the project I created the workshop that was called: “May you drop off your burdens and soar: A Holistic workshop for the Wounded healer Nurse.” In September of 2010, I ran the workshop and collected the data from it. The outcomes showed the need by nurses and how their lives changed that day. I felt so blessed to not only create a Masters project, but one that could support nurses on their transformational journey. I defended my thesis on December 2, 2010 and graduated with a 4.0 on December 18, 2010.

Dear AHNA members,

I was the recipient of the Charlotte McGuire scholarship during my PhD studies in 2009. It was an honor to receive this award in memory of Charlie whose work inspired and continues to inspire me to be a better nurse, scholar and person. The monies helped me purchase books and necessary supplies needed during my coursework and I am so grateful! I am now completing my dissertation at the University of Arizona. The support from this scholarship and from AHNA members has been invaluable. Thank you Charlie and thank you AHNA!

All best wishes,

Jen Reich

Jennifer Reich, RN, ANP-BC PhD candidate
University of Arizona College of Nursing

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Research Grant Award

When Dr. Lyn Rew was asked how receiving a AHNA grant has helped her research career she replied:
I received $1,000 from AHNA on April 14, 2000 for the study titled “A Theory of Self-Care Grounded in the Experiences of Homeless Adolescents.” I presented a poster with this title at the annual conference of AHNA in Phoenix, AZ on 6/26/2003. The final paper was published in *Nursing Research* in 2003 and was titled “A Theory of Taking Care of Oneself Grounded in Experiences of Homeless Youth.” It is found in volume 52, pp. 234-241.

This was a qualitative study of 15 (7 males, 6 females, 2 transgendered) homeless youth who received services from a street drop-in center in Austin, Tx. Each participant was interviewed and findings revealed a basic social process of taking care of oneself in a high-risk environment. This experience reinforced my beliefs that the human spirit is extremely resilient and creative. I’ve used this experience to help my students and many others in my community to understand the concepts of resilience, inner strength, and creativity. **This grant helped me develop more confidence in my ability to conduct research with hard-to-reach and underserved populations.** As a result, I’ve received several larger grants from NIH to promote the health and well-being of homeless youth in a community setting.

I hope this brief snapshot of the importance of this small grant will be helpful to AHNA and to many others who may benefit from seed grants such as this in the future.

Sincerely,

**Lynn Rew, EdD, RN, AHN-BC, FAAN**
Denton & Louise Cooley and Family Centennial Professor in Nursing

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In 2008 **Lori Settersten, PhD, RN, WHNP-BC, FNP-BC, PEH** was awarded an AHNA research grant. When asked how this grant had influenced her career she replied with the following:

I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for the research grant award from the American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA).
This funding was used to support a pilot study and to provide the opportunity for me to focus on a new and exciting area of research: Esoteric Healing. With the assistance of AHNA’s research grant award, two articles have been published thus far related to Esoteric Healing and the pilot study. Moreover, results from the pilot study will be used to apply for additional funding to continue studying the effects of this intriguing energy healing modality. I extend my heartfelt thank you to AHNA for taking a chance on funding this new and important research!


Highest & Best, Lori Settersten, PhD, RN, WHNP-BC, FNP-BC, PEH

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**Partners in Wellness: A Cancer Wellness Program**

**By Bonnie Berk, MS, RN, HNB-BC, ERYT**

Six years ago, two colleagues and myself got together to discuss the possibility of starting a cancer wellness program. Since we all worked independently, we decided to connect with a non-profit to help us with this endeavor so we could apply for grants. We teamed up with the YWCA Carlisle and Partners in Wellness was born!

We were able to secure a grant from a local health and wellness foundation and began to offer yoga, reiki and massage to people diagnosed with cancer and 18 months after treatment. Since then, we have had over 200 people participate in this program. However, to date, the program is underutilized. The main challenge is to get physicians and other health care professionals to refer into the program.

That is why I decided to apply for the AHNA research grant. Two years ago, I went to a workshop at the AHNA conference on doing qualitative research. I got really excited at the prospect of getting some hard data on our program so we could show the skeptics the benefits of this type of program.
I am so grateful to AHNA for first teaching me about qualitative research, and secondly, for helping to support my efforts. Currently, we are working with Dickinson College on the research project funded by AHNA and hope to have some data in the next couple of months.

This has been an amazing journey. In pursuing the research, we found another partner in Dickinson College. The professors we are working with are very interested in continuing to be involved with the program in an effort of giving students at the college opportunities to work as our interns. They are donating their time to help us put together a computer program to better track the program results and then use students to periodically analyze the data we receive.

I am hoping that once the research is completed, we will also have developed a model that other nurses and holistic practitioners can use to offer similar programs in their communities. Before securing the research grant, we all knew the benefits of this program for cancer patients and their families. **With the help of AHNA, we can not only hope to increase the utilization of this program but also help other people struggling with cancer experience a better quality of life. Thank you AHNA!**

Dear AHNA Members,

I received the [AHNA research grant](#) in 2010 for my nursing dissertation study, "Aromatherapy Hand Massage for Older Adults with Chronic Pain Living in Long-Term Care". The study is a prospective, randomized control trial to compare the effect of aromatherapy hand massage and hand massage without aromatherapy, to individual attention from a nurse on measures of chronic pain. **The award has made it possible to hire registered nurses with expertise in care of older adults as research assistants** to collect blinded pre/posttest data, which improves the validity of the study design. At this time, I am in the data collection and analysis phase of the study. Once the study is completed and published, I think the grant will help persuade nurses working in long-term care areas to identify those residents who might benefit from this simple and easy to learn technique.

Sincerely,

**Kathleen Cino, RN, MS**
Continue to help holistic nurses like these. Donate Now.