

# THE LAMP

## GROWING OUR OWN

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 **St. Elizabeth**  
SCHOOL OF NURSING  
Division of Franciscan Health

## FINDING BALANCE



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## THE HEALING POWER OF GREEN SPACES



Enhancing Nurse Well-being  
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## A LEGACY OF CARE



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# LETTER from the DIRECTOR

## To Readers of *The Lamp*,

Welcome to the 2024 issue of *The Lamp*, our annual alumni magazine. As we come together to celebrate another year of achievements and growth, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for each of you. Your stories of dedication, compassion and excellence in the field of nursing continue to inspire our current students and uphold the esteemed reputation of St. Elizabeth School of Nursing. It is your unwavering commitment to the science of healing and the art of compassion that drives our mission forward.

In recent news, it is with great pride and excitement that I share some significant updates with you. St. Elizabeth School of Nursing is thrilled to officially declare and publish our continued ACEN accreditation, following the site visit in 2023. This accreditation, which is reviewed every eight years, affirms our standing at the pinnacle of nursing education.

Another new development is the removal of the parking garage to make way for the expansion and growth of the St. Elizabeth Garden. This future space will enhance the well-being of our community, offering a place of reflection and serenity, you can learn more in our "Garden Update" in this issue!

We also encourage you to visit our recently refreshed and updated website—[steson.org](http://steson.org)—to stay connected with the latest news and developments at St. Elizabeth.

Even after our time at school is over, we all still learn new things everyday, taking time to continue cultivating our individual growth. This issue of *The Lamp* features articles focused on personal and professional development. "Finding Balance: Navigating Work and Life as Nurses" delves into the importance of maintaining a healthy work/life balance, particularly for nurses and others working in today's fast-paced world of healthcare.

As we look to the future, we draw inspiration from you, our esteemed alumni. Your dedication, compassion and excellence in the field of nursing set a powerful example for our current students. Together, we are shaping the future of healthcare and nurturing the next generation of nurses who will carry forward the legacy of St. Elizabeth. We are proud of your accomplishments and are confident that, with your support, our community will continue to thrive and grow.

Best wishes,

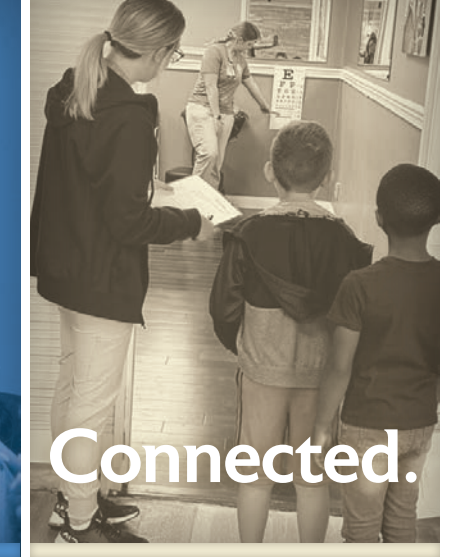
**Michelle L. Gerrety, EdD, MSN, RN**  
St. Elizabeth School of Nursing Director



Focused.



Proven.



Connected.

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### In memoriam of our alumni who walked in Christ's healing footsteps. Well done, good and faithful servants.

<b>Karen Bahler</b> Passed Aug 2023 2008 Graduate	<b>Connie Elliot</b> Passed Feb 2024 1963 Graduate	<b>Carol Fischer</b> Passed Aug 2022 1965 Graduate	<b>Arla Green</b> Passed Aug 2023 1994 Graduate
<b>Sharon Haby</b> Passed Feb 2023 1954 Graduate	<b>Jan Pecar</b> Passed Nov 2023 1978 Graduate	<b>Judith Rausch</b> Passed Apr 2024 1960 Graduate	

Brought to you by:



St. Elizabeth School of Nursing is where ordinary people become extraordinary nurses. For over 125 years, we have focused on just one thing—nursing. Our holistic curriculum offers hands-on learning experiences. Small classes foster personal connections. Graduates leave primed for their aspired career—the career that, perhaps, chose them.

**Michelle Gerrety**  
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**Jennifer Eberly**  
Director of Development, Franciscan Health Foundation

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# CONGRATULATIONS, GRADS!

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*Director of Development,  
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**Join the Alumni Advisory  
Board of Directors today!**

Interested in serving on our Alumni Advisory Board of Directors?  
Contact **Jennifer Eberly** at 765-423-6812 for more information.

*The Advisory Board currently meets 3-4 times per year,  
and virtual options are available.*

## DECEMBER 2023



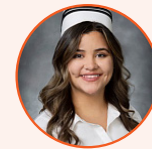
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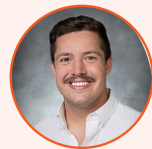
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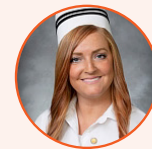
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Kayla Eli



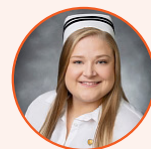
Cole Martin



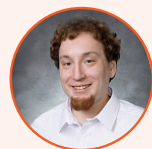
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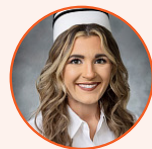
Madysyn Miller



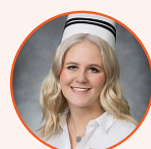
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Salvador



Tia King



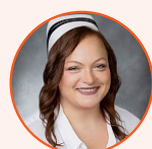
Makayla Peterson



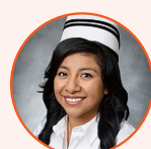
Jade Deno



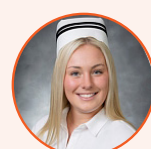
Sarah Lenehan



Barbara Stacey



Maria Diego  
Francisco



Carli Leonard



Andrew Taylor

## MAY 2024



Amanda Barker



Ashly Littlejohn



Lauren Wethington



Erika Caylor



Andrea Long



Mackenzie Cline



Brooke Oliver



Louis Dube



Kaylee Pickell



Kristen Fellure



Kendra Smith



Hannah Gustus



Karissa Springer



Jenna Jenkins



Rimsha Syed

## JULY 2024



Tasha Ashlock



Kayla Mitriane



Kyanna Dyer



Kate Morgan



Hannah Hiscox



Emma Nelson



Kaylee Kerr



Austin Paprocki



Madilene Kilby



Caitlin Rendon



Vanessa Metcalfe



Kamryn Shepperd



Chloe Miller



Colleen Stout

# THE HEALING POWER OF GREEN SPACES

## ENHANCING NURSE WELL-BEING

In the demanding world of nursing, where the balance between compassionate caregiving and personal well-being is often precarious, maintaining balanced mental health can quickly slide out of control. We recognize mental health's crucial role in the effectiveness and happiness of students and professionals. One easily overlooked but uniquely impactful factor in mental health is the time spent in green spaces.

Everyone can benefit from green spaces. Whether it's a short walk in a park or simply spending time in a garden, nature's influence can lead to significant improvements in mental and physical health. These benefits underscore the importance of integrating green spaces into our lives, particularly in high-stress professions and environments.

### PROVIDING A BRIEF RESPITE

It's no secret that nurses and nursing students face stressful workloads that contribute to fatigue, psychological burden, insomnia and more. In such an environment, interactions with nature or "green spaces" are essential.

According to a 2023 study from the Journal of Clinical Nursing, exposure to nature has been demonstrated to facilitate better outcomes for nurses. Green spaces offer a sanctuary where the pressures of the healthcare environment—or for students, the classroom—can be momentarily forgotten, allowing for mental and physical rejuvenation.

The benefits of nature extend beyond stress relief. Spending time in nature has been found to have a variety of benefits such as blood pressure reduction, lowered heart rate, decreased muscle tension and a reduction in the production of stress hormones. These physiological changes are critical in reducing the rates of diabetes, stroke, cardiovascular disease and even mortality rates. For many nurses and students, who often work long, varied shifts, these health benefits are invaluable.

Exposure to green spaces has also been linked to better sleep, which is crucial for nurses or students working varied and extended shifts. Better sleep quality directly correlates with enhanced cognitive function, mood stabilization and overall well-being, making it easier for nurses to handle their demanding roles.

Green spaces can even contribute to improved concentration. According to a 2009 publication from the University of Delaware, green spaces can enhance our ability to concentrate, both on immediate tasks and on the surroundings we perceive subconsciously. Voluntary attention, which is the intense focus required to ignore distractions and stay dedicated to work or study, is necessary throughout the workday. In contrast, involuntary attention involves the effortless and enjoyable awareness of environmental stimuli—it's what makes us feel at peace when we're outdoors. Observing natural scenes allows our voluntary attention to rest and lets involuntary attention take over, rejuvenating our minds.

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Moreover, green spaces can contribute to community confidence and crime reduction. A study using 98 vegetated and un-vegetated apartment buildings in Chicago showed that vegetated spaces cut crime by around 50%. The vegetation inspired community pride for the area that resulted in less litter and less graffiti. Besides mitigating psychological precursors to violence by reducing stress and anxiety, green spaces increase a neighborhood's collective surveillance as well. Vegetated landscapes, or areas with green spaces, invite more people to use them, allowing more people to come in and care about the space.

### FOSTERING GROWTH

The impact of green spaces isn't limited to nurses. For students with us at St. Elizabeth, regular interaction with nature can foster a sense of peace and balance amidst the rigors of academic life. This holistic approach to education, blending academic rigor with well-being, prepares them not just as skilled professionals but as holistic caregivers and well-balanced individuals.

In a business setting, green spaces boost productivity and improve morale among colleagues. The University of Delaware reports studies that have shown that desk workers who can see nature—whether through a window, indoor plants or even a photo—tend to feel more relaxed overall. Conversely, those without any view of plants wrestle with higher levels of stress and anxiety.

It's in this way that green spaces play a pivotal role in personal and professional growth. For nurses and students alike, these environments provide a respite that fosters reflection, learning and rejuvenation.



The tranquility of a garden or the serenity of a park can inspire creativity and a deeper connection to one's purpose and passion. As individuals grow in their personal lives, they bring a renewed sense of dedication and compassion to their professional roles, enhancing the overall quality of care they provide.

Growth is not just about professional development; it's about evolving as individuals. Green spaces encourage mindfulness and self-awareness, allowing people to reconnect with themselves and their surroundings. This connection nurtures emotional resilience and a stronger sense of community, both of which are essential for thriving in high-stress environments like healthcare.

### LEADING THE WAY IN HOLISTIC HEALTHCARE

As the landscape of healthcare and education continues to evolve, the importance of mental health and well-being for nurses and students cannot be overstated. Green spaces offer a simple yet powerful solution to some of the challenges faced by those in the nursing profession. With our deep commitment to service, ethical integrity and academic excellence, we aim to continue recognizing and promoting the invaluable role of nature in nurturing the caregivers who are so vital to our communities.

Sources: Journal of Clinical Nursing 2023, University of Delaware 2009

**UPDATE**

# FROM GROUNDS TO

# Garden

We are excited to share the latest updates on the ongoing St. Elizabeth Garden project, a green space initiative that continues to transform our campus. This garden is being developed on the site of the old school building and recently demolished parking garage. We met with the Alumni Advisory Board President, Terry Crowder, who shared some insights with us about the project as a whole.

Terry proudly told us that the project is designed to honor the history of our school and the countless students who have passed through its doors. On its completion, the St. Elizabeth Garden will feature a memorial walkway with benches, offering a serene environment where students can study, socialize and connect with nature. This garden is not just a space for relaxation; it is a tribute to the legacy of the school and the dormitory that once stood there.

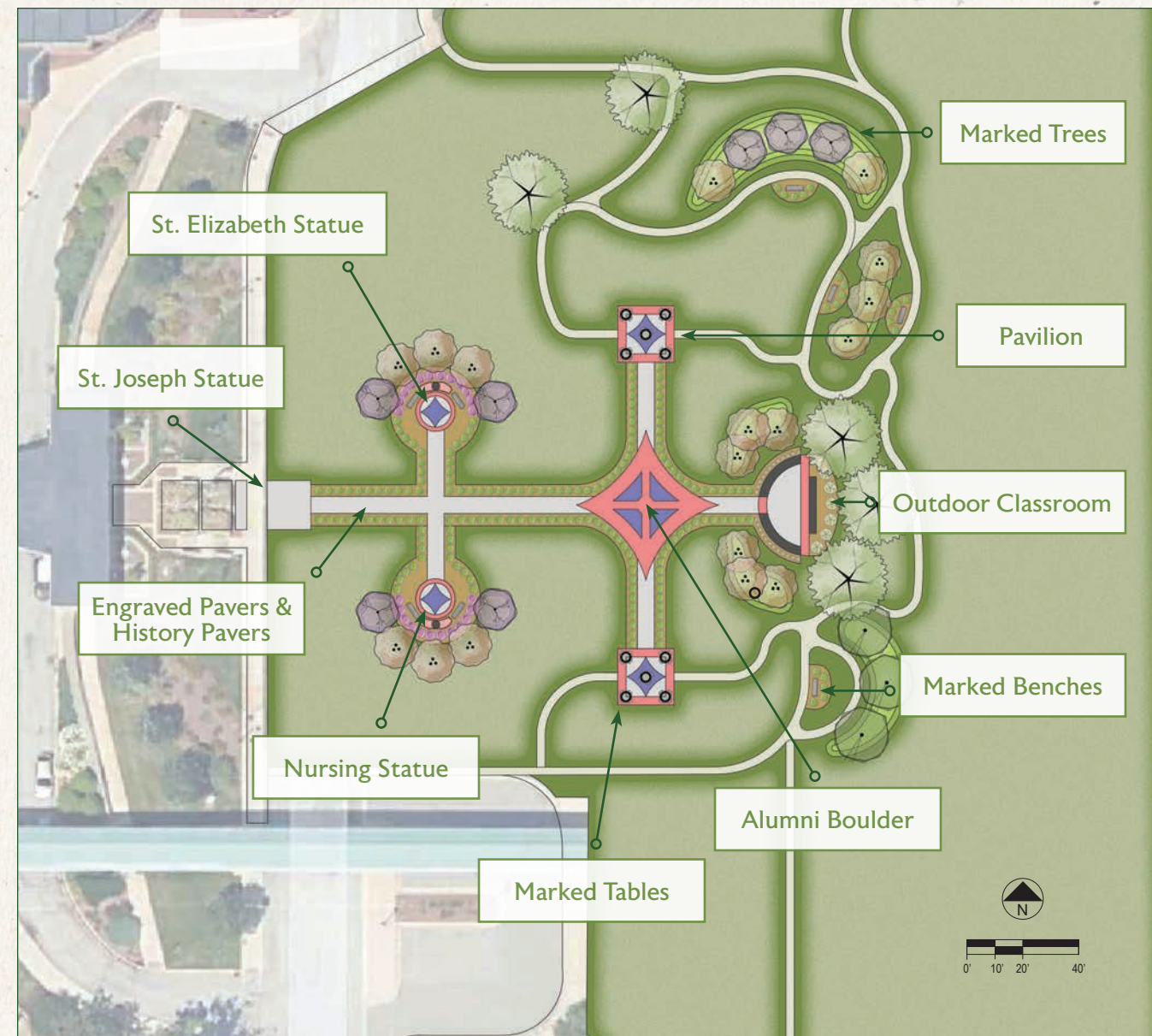
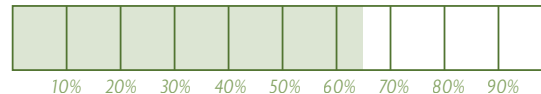
Mary VanDerVolgen-Goldman and Henrietta Ket, both St. Elizabeth alumni, and members of the alumni advisory board, brought up the idea to further honor this legacy by creating a nurse statue for the garden—in an original, old-style uniform—representing the history of nursing, and the school itself.

We invite you to leave a lasting legacy by supporting the St. Elizabeth Garden. Your contributions will help us create a beautiful, sustainable space that will benefit our entire community for years to come. Whether you choose to support the garden as an individual, a couple, a family, an alumni class or in honor of someone special, every donation makes a difference. This garden is about creating a place for students and other members of the St. Elizabeth community to be their true selves, reflecting our commitment to their holistic development and well-being.

Join us in cultivating a garden that enriches our campus and embodies the values of growth, healing and compassion at the core of St. Elizabeth School of Nursing. Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

### Goal Tracker

**\$194,723 OF \$300,000**



## GIVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ST. ELIZABETH GARDEN

*All donors will be recognized on the St. Elizabeth Garden donor wall.*

OPPORTUNITIES	NUMBER AVAILABLE	AMOUNT
Outdoor Classroom	1	\$50,000
Pavilion	1	\$25,000
Nursing Statue	1	\$25,000 (Funded)
Alumni Boulder	1	\$20,000
History Pavers	1	\$20,000
St. Elizabeth Statue	1	\$10,000
Landscape	5	\$5,000
St. Joseph Statue	1	\$5,000 (Funded)
Marked Tables	10	\$3,000
Marked Benches	6	\$2,500
Engraved Pavers	27	\$1,000
Marked Trees	16	\$500



**Give today by contacting:**

**Jennifer Eberly** at 765-423-6812 or [jennifer.eberly@franciscanalliance.org](mailto:jennifer.eberly@franciscanalliance.org)



# ALUMNI EVENT

NOVEMBER 2 2024

12:00 PM  
Eastern Time



**St. Elizabeth School of Nursing**  
1501 Hartford Street, Lafayette, IN  
Please Enter Through Doors on East Side of Building

**RSVP**

**Please RSVP by October 21, 2024**

by filling out and returning the enclosed RSVP card or by contacting **Cindy Benner** at [cindy.benner@franciscanalliance.org](mailto:cindy.benner@franciscanalliance.org) or (765) 423-6810.



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**Kathryn Liggett**

Class of 1988

**What is your best memory from nursing school?**

In my second year of clinicals, during my ortho rotation, I had a fresh total hip, post-op day 1, screaming in pain at 7 a.m. From my experience as a tech on an ortho unit at a different facility, I immediately recognized that her hip was dislocated. I told the patient's nurse who I felt thought I didn't know what I was talking about because I was a student. She then recognized that I was correct! The nurse and doctor praised my good catch! The patient had to go back to surgery to have it reduced and later thanked me for catching it. My other fun memories are from the friendships that were created and the times staying in the dorms.

**What advice would you give to new nurses?**

My advice to new nurses is that it's okay and normal to feel frustrated, overwhelmed or even cry at times. It doesn't mean that you're weak or that you're not made to be a nurse. It means you're human. You will have these feelings even years into your career. Just

remind yourself that, "this too shall pass." Never be afraid to ask for help! Remember, it is really important to choose a position that feels like home to you. Otherwise, you will become miserable in what you do.

**How did St. Elizabeth School of Nursing prepare you for your career?**

I think the amount of clinicals St. Elizabeth School of Nursing had to offer back when I started helped to better prepare us to become nurses. I tend to learn and retain better with hands-on experiences.

**If you weren't a nurse, what would you be?**

I have always wanted to be a nurse for as long as I can remember. My sister is also a School of Nursing graduate and our mom always instilled in us that as nurses we would always have a job if anything in life should ever happen. She also said robots could never take the place of a nurse, especially at the bedside.

**What do you like most about your current job?**

I love my job because of my patients and my coworkers! I love getting to know my patients and their life stories. I want them to feel like the person they are and not just a room number or faceless patient. I want them to feel as if they are my only patient. I also love my coworkers because they are my second family. They took me in as one of their own from the first day I transferred in!

**What is the toughest part about being a nurse?**

The toughest part of my job can also be the most rewarding, and that is working in Palliative Care helping this population of patients with symptom management at the end of their lives so it can be as easy and peaceful as possible. It's difficult for families to watch a loved one go through this. They temporarily take you in as part of their family so to speak, at one of the most vulnerable times in their lives. They love to share memories of their loved ones and look to you to help educate them as their loved one transitions through this process. It is truly an honor to care for these patients and their families during this difficult time.

**How do you see yourself through the lens of the school's mission; continuing Christ's healing ministry?**

I believe in treating everyone as you would want to be treated. I care for all my patients as if they were my own family member no matter what walk of life they come from.

### SHOUT OUT TO KATHRYN!

We want to thank Kathryn for her dedicated support given to our students. She has served as a preceptor for more students than any other previous or current nurse within our organization. We appreciate her willingness, dedication, kindness and ability to share her love for nursing with our students.



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT WITH TESSA KLEIN

# GROWING OUR OWN NURTURING TALENT FROM WITHIN

From Left to Right: Tessa Klein, Rebecca Horn, Tonya Collado and Andrea Blissitt

At St. Elizabeth School of Nursing, the philosophy of “growing our own” is not just a mantra; it’s a deeply ingrained practice. By focusing on hiring, promoting and developing talent from within, St. Elizabeth School of Nursing cultivates a robust and dedicated community of healthcare professionals. This commitment to nurturing internal talent is exemplified by the journey of Tessa Klein, an alumna who has come full circle to join the faculty.

## FROM STUDENT TO EDUCATOR: TESSA KLEIN'S STORY

Tessa Klein first joined St. Elizabeth School of Nursing to pursue an accelerated second degree program, an option not widely available in the region. This program stood out to her due to its emphasis on clinical hours, which is integral for a diploma-based education in collaboration with the University of Saint Francis for a BSN. The extensive clinical experience promised by the program was a major factor in her decision, as she knew it would provide her with the practical skills needed to excel as a nurse.

## A UNIQUE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Once enrolled, Tessa quickly realized that St. Elizabeth School of Nursing’s commitment to active learning set it apart. Driven by a growing passion for education, Tessa found her motivation fueled by this commitment, recognizing the profound impact the school has on its students’ lives. Rather than traditional lecture-based education, the faculty employed innovative methods to engage students. Interactive activities, hands-on learning and small class sizes created an environment where students could thrive. This approach ensured that knowledge was not just memorized for exams but was deeply understood and applied in real-world settings.

The comprehensive training at St. Elizabeth School of Nursing left Tessa feeling well-prepared for both the NCLEX and her first nursing job. The combination of rigorous clinical practice and strong classroom support helped her transition smoothly into her professional role. This solid foundation inspired her desire to return to St. Elizabeth School of Nursing, not just as an alumna but as an educator who could give back to the community that shaped her.

## EMBRACING THE ROLE OF EDUCATOR

After gaining valuable clinical experience over five years, Tessa felt ready to pursue her passion for teaching. She was encouraged by the faculty, who themselves balanced teaching with ongoing clinical work, ensuring their knowledge remained current and relevant. When a teaching position opened, Tessa immediately reached out, eager to bring her practical experience into the classroom.



Tessa Klein

The transition to a teaching role was seamless, thanks to the supportive environment at St. Elizabeth School of Nursing. Faculty members, including Dr. Gerrety and Dr. Blissitt, provided guidance and mentorship, helping Tessa navigate her

new responsibilities. This support network included orientation, classroom observation and continuous professional development, ensuring she felt confident and well-prepared to educate the next generation of nurses.

In her role as Primary Course Instructor (PCI) for Nursing 305, Tessa blends classroom teaching with clinical leadership. Her students benefit from her presence during their 12-hour clinical shifts, where she actively engages with them, facilitating hands-on learning and real-time problem-solving. This approach is a hallmark of St. Elizabeth’s philosophy, emphasizing the importance of practical experience alongside theoretical knowledge.

## ADVICE FOR ASPIRING NURSES

Tessa’s advice to incoming students is clear: commitment and active participation are key. Nursing school is demanding, and success requires dedication and the willingness to embrace active learning. She encourages students to take full advantage of the resources available, including faculty office hours and peer tutoring, to ensure they truly understand and can apply their knowledge.

## A COMMITMENT TO NURTURING TALENT

St. Elizabeth School of Nursing’s commitment to “growing our own” is vividly illustrated through not only Tessa Klein’s journey but all of the alumni faculty, who make up about one-third of the staff. From student to educator, her story is a testament to the supportive, nurturing environment that St. Elizabeth School of Nursing provides. It’s not just about producing competent nurses; it’s about fostering

a community of lifelong learners and educators who continue to grow and give back. Tessa’s experience highlights the school’s dedication to its students and alumni, creating a cycle of continuous improvement and excellence in nursing education. In Tessa’s words,

*“The school is very committed to their students, not just when they’re here, but throughout their careers. The relationships and support continue long after graduation, making St. Elizabeth a truly special place.”*

## RETURNING TO ST. ELIZABETH SCHOOL OF NURSING

We are proud to feature alumni who have graduated from St. Elizabeth School of Nursing and returned to join our staff. Their journey from students to staff members is a testament to their dedication and passion for nursing.

	GRADUATED	JOINED
<b>Andrea Blissitt, PhD, RN, CNE</b> Department Chair Adult Health Practice, Assistant Professor Nursing, Title IX Coordinator	2003	2008
<b>Tonya Collado, MSN, RN</b> Assistant Professor Nursing	2004	2011
<b>Robin Davis, MSN, RN</b> Assistant Professor Nursing	1999	2013
<b>Rebecca Horn, DNS, NNP, RN</b> Assistant Professor Nursing	1985	2003
<b>Tessa Klein, BSN, RN</b> Assistant Professor Nursing	2019	2024
<b>Amy Vanderkolk, MS, RN</b> Coordinator Skills Lab and Assessment	2006	2008
<b>Glenda Wicks, MSN, RN</b> Assistant Professor Nursing	1987	2003



# A LEGACY OF CARE

## Halle Frodge & Family

From Left to Right: Staci Gross, Halle Frodge and Laci Frodge.

We are excited to highlight a remarkable family of nurses whose journey is intertwined with the history and spirit of St. Elizabeth School of Nursing. Meet Laci Frodge and Staci Gross, identical twin sisters who graduated together from St. Elizabeth in 2012, and Halle Frodge, Laci's daughter, who we are blessed to have as a student currently.

Laci and Staci's paths to nursing were distinct, yet their journeys converged at St. Elizabeth. Both became mothers before pursuing their nursing careers. Laci's inspiration came from the compassionate care she received from nurses during the birth of her child. This profound experience motivated her to become a caregiver herself, dedicated to providing the same love and care to others. Staci, on the other hand, was drawn to nursing after the loss of a family member. During that difficult time spending time with family and realizing in herself there was a passion for taking care of those in need.

Halle, initially resistant to following in her mother and aunt's footsteps, pursued a degree in Human Development at Purdue University. Despite her efforts to carve out a different path, Halle ultimately found her passion in nursing. The challenges of growing up being compared to Laci and Staci transformed into a source of pride as she discovered her love for the profession. Now, she embraces the legacy of care and compassion that runs in her family.



When asked about their advice for those considering a career in nursing, Laci and Staci were unanimous: "Do it!" They emphasized the unique advantages of studying at St. Elizabeth School of Nursing, where students dive into clinical experiences right from the start. This hands-on approach allows students to quickly determine if nursing is the right path for them, providing a solid foundation for their future careers. Halle jokingly echoed this sentiment with her own encouraging words: "Do it, even if you don't want to be just like your mom and aunt!" Halle emphasized to us,

***As a student at St. Elizabeth you are so much more than a number, they care about you and want to help you succeed.***

The stories of Laci, Staci and Halle are a testament to the enduring impact of St. Elizabeth School of Nursing. Their journeys highlight the transformative power of compassionate care and the importance of following one's passion. We are proud to celebrate their achievements and look forward to seeing Halle continue the family tradition of excellence in nursing.



**DO YOU HAVE A FAMILY MEMBER INTERESTED IN BECOMING A STUDENT AT ST. ELIZABETH SCHOOL OF NURSING?**

Scan the QR code or visit [steson.org/future-students](https://steson.org/future-students) to learn more!



# ACEN ACCREDITATION

We are proud to announce our continuation of receiving ACEN certification for our diploma nursing program! This most recent certification will continue through 2031.



# FINDING BALANCE

## NAVIGATING WORK AND LIFE AS NURSES



### THE CHALLENGE OF BALANCE

Wherever we are in our journey, achieving a harmonious balance between our professional and personal lives is an ongoing challenge. For nurses and other healthcare professionals, this balance is particularly crucial. The demands of the nursing profession often blur the lines between work and personal time, making it essential to consciously create space for oneself at every stage of life—whether as a student, professional or beyond. However, this is much easier said than done.

Creating space for oneself is a fundamental step in achieving a balanced life. It involves setting boundaries, prioritizing self-care and ensuring that personal well-being is not overshadowed by professional obligations. For nursing students, this might mean carving out time for relaxation and hobbies amidst often rigorous academic schedules. As professionals, it could involve taking regular breaks, making time to pursue interests outside of work and engaging in activities that recharge the mind and body. It's also about maintaining those habits and continually finding new ways to nurture personal growth.

The nursing profession, while rewarding, comes with its own set of challenges. One of the most significant trends among nurses is the struggle with burnout. The constant high-stress environment, emotional demands and long hours can take a toll on mental and physical health. The

best way to address burnout is on an individual level based on each person's unique needs. This includes recognizing the signs early, seeking support and implementing stress-relief strategies such as mindfulness, exercise and connecting with loved ones. Creating a supportive network and having open conversations about the pressures of the job can also alleviate some of the burdens.

### PROMOTING PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Recognizing a greater individual purpose beyond merely “doing the job” is a great start to harnessing a better balance. While defining a “life goal” might seem daunting, it doesn't need to be quite that broad. Focus on what makes you proud to be who you are, and integrate those aspects more intentionally into your life. This might mean dedicating more purposeful time at work, investing more in your relationships with friends and family or simply spending more effort on your hobbies. Since everyone's life is different, everyone's sense of balance will also be unique.

Furthermore, personal and professional growth flourishes when one learns to balance the various aspects of life. Balancing work with personal time, and hobbies with responsibilities, is not just about managing time effectively but also about making intentional choices that promote well-being. This holistic approach ensures that each facet of life complements the other, leading to a more fulfilling and sustainable lifestyle.

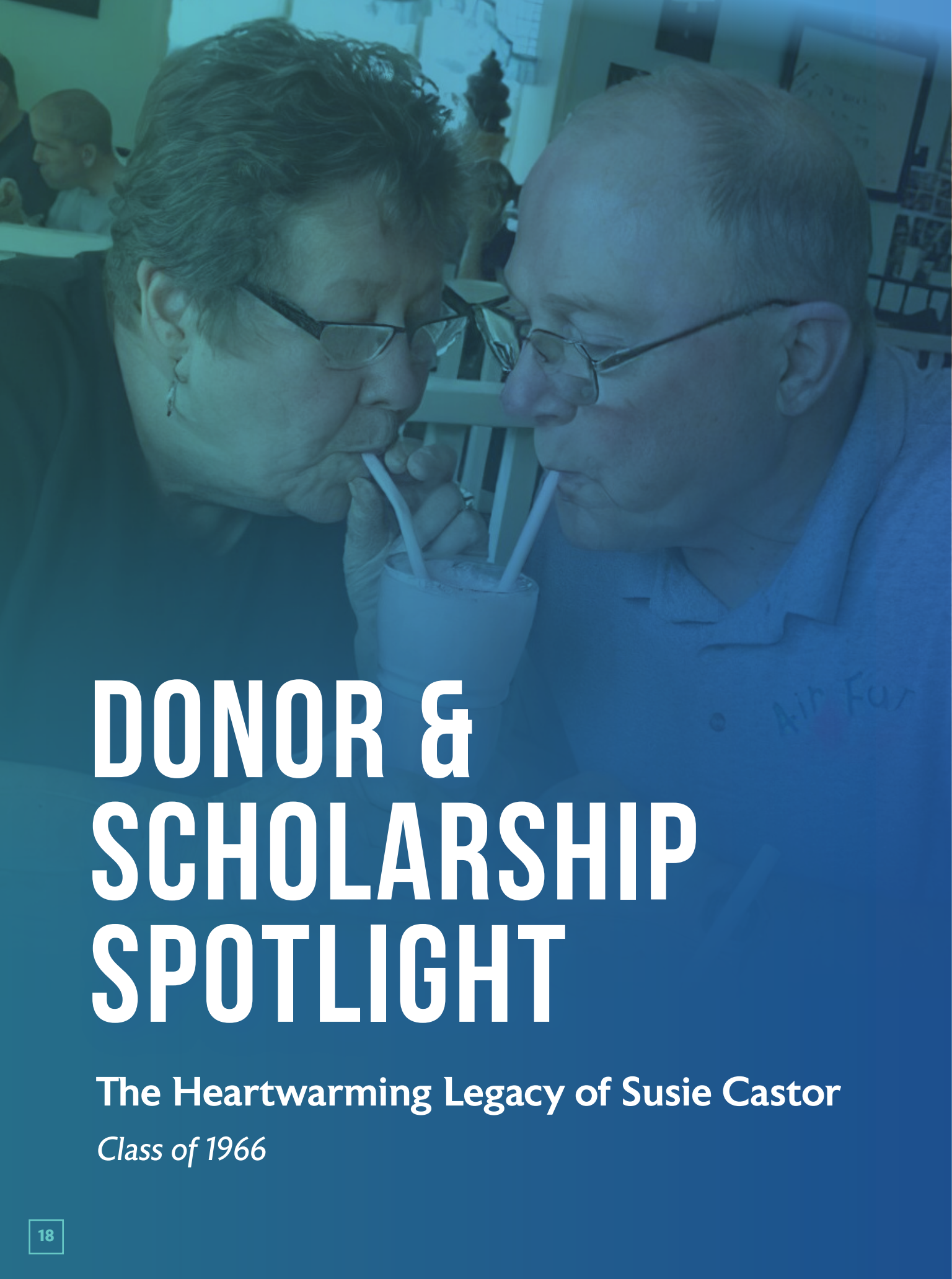
### EMBRACING CHANGE

The world is constantly changing, and the realm of nursing is no exception. While change can be intimidating and complex, it represents a crucial growth point for our society. Nurses should embrace these changes and make an active effort to be part of them. This could involve becoming a leader in the field, actively participating in professional conversations or staying informed about advances in technology or healthcare that matter most to you. Being proactive in these areas not only contributes to professional development but also helps in maintaining a balanced life as you're now being an active participant in your own life.

As we navigate through different phases of our lives, the strategies for achieving balance may change, but the goal remains the same: to create a life where personal and professional aspects are in harmony, enabling us to grow and thrive in all areas. By recognizing the importance of balance and actively pursuing it, nurses can ensure a healthier, more sustainable career and personal life.

## ACTIONABLE STEPS

- 1 Set Clear Boundaries**  
Establish specific work hours and communicate them to ensure your personal time is respected.
- 2 Prioritize Self-Care**  
Regularly set aside time for activities that help you relax and maintain physical and mental well-being.
- 3 Create a Supportive Network**  
Build a network of fellow healthcare professionals for advice, shared experiences and mutual support.
- 4 Implement Stress-Relief Strategies**  
Engage in mindfulness practices and regular physical activities to reduce stress and improve overall well-being.
- 5 Recognize & Address Burnout**  
Be aware of early signs of burnout, ensure you take regular breaks and use vacation time to recharge.
- 6 Engage in Hobbies and Interests**  
Dedicate time to hobbies and interests outside of work to rejuvenate your mind and bring joy to your life.
- 7 Embrace Continuous Learning & Professional Growth**  
Keep up with advancements in the nursing field and seek leadership opportunities for professional development.
- 8 Make Intentional Choices**  
Reflect on what truly matters to you, and make choices that align with your personal and professional goals.



# DONOR & SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT

The Heartwarming Legacy of Susie Castor  
*Class of 1966*

We are honored to spotlight Mike Castor and the scholarship he established in memory of his beloved wife, Susie Castor, affectionately known to him as “Suze.” Their story is one of enduring love, dedication and a commitment to helping others, a testament to the profound impact one life can have on a community.

Mike and Susie met at Purdue University in 1963. Susie’s roommate was dating Mike’s roommate, which led to their introduction. They quickly hit it off, spending many memorable moments together, with Mike often waiting for Susie in the greeting room at St. Elizabeth. Both graduated in 1966, and their journey together began.

Married on January 14, 1967, they welcomed their first son, Scott, soon after. Their daughter, Lori, was born in 1969 and is now the primary caregiver for Mike. Despite facing the challenges of Susie’s battle with Parkinson’s, dementia and Alzheimer’s, their bond remained unbreakable. Susie passed away in January of 2022 at 77 years old. Reflecting on his life with her, Mike shared,

*“Two and a half years later I am still in love with her, and I will be forever.”*

Susie was a natural-born leader and an exceptional nurse. She began her career in nursing and quickly rose to the position of supervisor on the third shift, a reflection of her leadership qualities and dedication. Her early career was marked by her ability to inspire and lead her peers, earning her the respect and admiration of those around her.

Her dedication to nursing was not just professional but deeply personal. Mike recalls, “She was totally devoted to nursing, very thoughtful and never got mad at anyone.” Her tremendous rapport with patients and colleagues made her a beloved figure in the medical community. Even after a doctor advised her to retire from nursing due to her health, Susie found new ways to bring joy and comfort to others.

Mike’s career also reflected a strong sense of purpose and dedication. After graduating, he worked for four years at Beeler Corporation, a helicopter transmission company, contributing to the war effort in his own way despite being unable to serve due to a physical accident. He later joined General Electric, where his career continued to flourish.



Susie Castor

The Castors lived in Indianapolis for seven years before moving to Evansville, where Susie once again became a supervisor, a role she excelled in everywhere she went thanks to her natural leadership abilities. Her career path took a significant turn when they decided to open a toy store, a venture that allowed Susie to bring happiness and creativity to countless children.

She transformed into “Grandma Toy,” a beloved figure in the toy store Mike and Susie bought in the early 2000s, where she encouraged children to play and explore. She believed in the power of interactive play and often joined in the fun, creating a magical environment for children and their families. The store was not just a business but a reflection of Susie’s generous spirit and love for children.

The Susan (Hoenigman) Castor St. Elizabeth School of Nursing Scholarship was established by Mike in Susie’s honor to support nursing students at St. Elizabeth School of Nursing, ensuring that her legacy of care and leadership lives on. This scholarship is a fitting tribute to Susie’s life, dedicated to nurturing the next generation of nurses who will continue her work of compassion and excellence.

Mike’s love for Susie and his commitment to honoring her memory is a testament to their remarkable life together. The St. Elizabeth community is deeply grateful for his generosity and the lasting impact it will have on future generations of nurses. Through this scholarship, Susie’s spirit of dedication and kindness continues to inspire and support those who follow in her footsteps.

# Scholarship Recipients 2024

**Alexandra Laine Wickes Nursing Scholarship:**  
Justinia Speer

**Anita Reed “Lead with Your Heart” Scholarship:**  
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**Betty Jean Lowery Endowed Nursing Scholarship:**  
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Reghan Salmon

**Brenda Murraray Memorial Scholarship:**  
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Shenita Peete

**Dianne Davis Scholarship:**  
Rita Parkinson and Lauren Powell

**Indiana Center for Nursing:**  
Tasha Ashlock, Rita Parkinson and Maricruz Santos-Cervantes

**Gertrude Loeb Rosen Nursing Scholarship:**  
Adalyn Buschman, Sierra Davis and Brayli Ricks

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**Hunter Ryan Memorial Scholarship:**  
Faith Dixon

**Jacqueline Bahler Endowed Scholarship:**  
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**James & JoAnn Vorst Nursing Scholarship:**  
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**Marcia Lynn Wykoff Nursing Scholarship:**  
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**Sharon Davis Haby Nursing Scholarship:**  
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**Susan (Hoenigman) Castor St. Elizabeth School of Nursing Scholarship:**  
Marleigh Davis and Ella Hanni

**Susan Oesterling Whitaker Nursing Scholarship:**  
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**William & Martha Fancher Nursing Scholarship:**  
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**Wilson Family Nursing Scholarship:**  
Ella Hanni, Emma Nash, Antoinette Pruitt and Justinia Speer

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All gifts made to St. Elizabeth School of Nursing allow us to continue Christ's healing ministry and make a lasting impact in the lives of our students.

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# ↑ LEADING THE WAY

## Pioneering Nurse Education

We love celebrating our faculty and staff, especially when it comes to taking new and innovative steps in the world of nurse education! Here are two of our valued faculty who are taking strides to innovate and evolve nurse education. Check out how they're using their skills and passion to impact the next generation of nurses!



**Betty Mosier-Johnson, MSN, RN, PMHNP-BC**

Assistant Professor Nursing

Betty led a break-out session at the Nurse Educators Conference in the Rockies in June of 2024. Her session was called, "Riding the Waves of Change with Low-Fidelity Mental Health Simulation."



**Brittany Maxwell, MSN, RN**

Assistant Professor Nursing

Brittany is bringing the flipped classroom back into the limelight! Body Interact™ technology allows nursing students to become an active part of their classroom experience, putting into practice what they are learning using a digital interface.

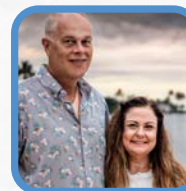


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# Class Notes

## LET US KNOW WHERE YOU'VE BEEN AND WHAT YOU'VE BEEN UP TO

Do you have an accomplishment or milestone—personal or professional—that you want to share with your fellow St. Elizabeth School of Nursing alumni? Scan the QR code below or visit [bit.ly/steson-alumni](https://bit.ly/steson-alumni) to access our Class Notes submission form. Submissions will be featured in future issues of *The Lamp*.



**JOANIE SACKETT, CLASS OF 1989**

I was a 1989 graduate. Labor and Delivery was my specialty until 2015. I earned my certification in inpatient obstetrics and maintained it until now. I began forensic nursing in 2002 and completed that in 2022. I was a sexual assault nurse examiner with a specialty in adult and pediatric. I earned my bachelor's degree in 2020. I became the coordinator of patient experience in 2015 for the facility I had worked for since 1998. I moved to our division as a coordinator over our discharge call department, where there are over 26 nurses that do approximately 60,000 calls monthly for the Dallas Fort Worth area for North Texas Division Medical City Healthcare.

I am in the last part of my masters in nursing education. I hope to retire in the next five years and still teach RN to BSN students online. I have been married 40 years next August. I have three beautiful daughters, of whom one is a nurse as well. I have three grandchildren. I volunteer locally and also back in Indiana at a special needs camp ran by a friend, as their photographer. I have served as a medical missionary in Honduras and Guatemala. We are active in our church and volunteer there on our medical team.

I still love being a nurse! I wish I would have expanded my nursing career outside labor and delivery before I did, but God had a reason He placed me there and now a new season of life has blossomed!



**ANNE EVERS WHEATLEY, CLASS OF 1996**

Hello from the class of 1996! After graduating from St. Elizabeth, and then the first class through Purdue I moved west. I worked in postpartum/nursery, peds and home health. I graduated from the University of Washington with my ARNP/ Certified Nurse Midwifery degree in 2003. I served Tacoma as a CNM until 2021. I taught LPN school during the pandemic and now will return to my women's community as an ARNP at our county breast diagnostic center. I have been married for 25 years, and have a 15-year-old daughter at home. Thanks to St. Elizabeth for helping me start my lifelong career.



**KRISTINA MATTSON, CLASS OF 2011**

I'm currently a Family Nurse Practitioner in Gilbert, Arizona. I own a thriving PCP office that just won the, "Best of the East Valley"

Award! I'm also an Aesthetic Injector on the side. Find us on our website, [sapphirehealthaz.com](https://sapphirehealthaz.com), and our Instagram, @sapphirehealthaz.



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To submit information by phone, please contact Jennifer Eberly at (765) 423-6812.



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