



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming
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News Release

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BCBSWY Caring Foundation Provides Funding for Nursing Education in Wyoming

CHEYENNE – The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming (BCBSWY) Caring Foundation has invested in nursing education at the University of Wyoming and the state’s community colleges through the creation of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming Scholars Program, part of the larger initiative, *Meeting Wyoming’s Needs Through Nurse Education*.

The gift, which totals more than \$80,000, will support scholarships for students pursuing baccalaureate and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degrees at UW.

“This fantastic partnership between Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming and the Fay W. Whitney School of Nursing supports nurses completing their BSN (bachelor of science nursing) degree, which is strongly recommended by the Institute of Medicine,” says Mary Burman, dean of the UW Fay W. Whitney School of Nursing. “Moreover, it supports DNP students who will serve important roles in primary care and psychiatric mental health.”

Each year, the gift will provide scholarships at each Wyoming community college to students who want to continue their education and pursue their bachelor’s degree in nursing from UW. Scholarships also will be awarded to students in the UW DNP program who intend to practice in a clinic setting in Wyoming after graduation. The BCBSWY Caring Foundation already funds scholarships for community college students interested in the health professions and nursing through its Health Scholarship program.

“Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming is committed to improving the health of its members and strengthening the Wyoming healthcare system,” says Rick Schum, BCBSWY president and CEO. “As we meet with local hospital officials, they tell us how difficult it is to find nursing staff. Our Caring Foundation gives us a great opportunity to invest in quality people who will be on the front lines working with patients to ensure they get healthy and stay healthy longer.”

“Recruiting nurses for our community hospital is one of our biggest challenges,” says Jerry Klein, CEO of Sweetwater Memorial Hospital in Rock Springs. “We’re excited about this support for nurse education and hope to work closely with the university and Blue Cross Blue Shield to expand this program to provide educational opportunities for even more interested Wyoming students.”

Wyoming Scholars for the 2016-17 academic year -- including hometown, degree and institution -- are:

Casper -- Brenda Jennings, associate degree in nursing, Casper College.

Cody -- Kari Zora, associate degree in nursing, Northwest College.

Gillette -- Lillian Foster, associate degree in nursing, Northern Wyoming Community College District.

Jackson -- Brian McGeogh, associate degree in nursing, Central Wyoming College.

Lander -- Anna Felton, BSN, RN, Doctor of Nursing Practice, family nurse practitioner student, UW.

Laramie -- Danielle Alvarado-Speager, associate degree in nursing, Laramie County Community College.

Rock Springs -- Janae Holtzclaw, associate degree in nursing, Western Wyoming Community College; and Kara Jackson, associate degree in nursing, Western Wyoming Community College.

About the Blue Cross Blue Shield Caring Foundation of Wyoming

As a caring community, BCBSWY has been involved in promoting the good health and well-being of Wyoming residents by participating in and contributing to many health-related charities and causes. In 1990, BCBSWY established the Caring Foundation of Wyoming to help sustain this mission. The Caring Foundation of Wyoming now focuses its support through charitable giving. For more information, visit www.bcbswy.com/company_info/foundation.