

W

Promise

Opportunity

Vision

The Nursing Ph.D.

DREAM

PROJECT

SCHOOL OF NURSING
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON



PROMISE, OPPORTUNITY, VISION

The Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON | SCHOOL OF NURSING

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Overview

Nurses with Ph.D.s constitute the backbone of nursing science and training in the United States. As scientists and educators in institutions of higher learning, they lead the field in health care discoveries and foster future generations of nurses. At the UW School of Nursing, we offer Ph.D. students a rich educational experience that equips them to make significant and beneficial changes in the classroom, in the lab, in the community, and around the world.

We know that the graduates of our UW Ph.D. in Nursing Science program are a vital part of solving our country's nursing shortage, addressing pressing health needs in our society, and conducting research that promotes individual, family, community, and population health. They improve health equity locally and globally by strengthening nursing workforce capacity and expertise. Even so, students face financial barriers in obtaining a Ph.D., barriers that — depending on where they are in their educational journey — divert them away from teaching and research toward more lucrative fields. These barriers may even prevent them from applying to the program.

With the creation of the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project at the UW School of Nursing, we intend to give our Ph.D. candidates the gift of a lifetime: a full financial aid package that will completely fund their training as nurse-scientists. We hope that you will join us in supporting this project, and in helping realize the promise and potential of nursing research in contributing to innovative and improved health and healthcare practice.

A SUPERB NURSING EDUCATION

We educate and train nurses for our region — and for the world — and we do it exceptionally well. According to rankings published in *U.S. News & World Report*, the UW School of Nursing is:

Ranked No. 1 in public schools of nursing with a doctor of nursing practice program
(ranked 3rd when private schools also counted)

Ranked No. 1 in B.S. in nursing degree programs in public universities
(ranked 2nd when private schools also counted)



ADVANCING HUMAN HEALTH: The UW School of Nursing

The UW School of Nursing is a rich, diverse community of nursing scientists, and its mission is to address the health care needs of communities in Washington and around the world through education, research, and service. Our graduates are experts in interdisciplinary, holistic care, trained to lead teams that optimize well-being and quality of life for individual patients and entire communities.

Our doctoral students have an additional goal: confronting the greatest health challenges of our time through research, scholarship, and leadership. As one of the nation's top doctoral programs, the UW Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Science (Ph.D.) program is highly competitive, attracting qualified candidates from our region and from many other countries, including Ghana, Oman, Thailand, and China. The program's reputation is, in part, founded on the rigor and impact of the research pursued.

The UW School of Nursing is ranked No. 10 nationwide in receipt of research funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), with world-renowned centers of research excellence in healthy aging, infant and early childhood mental health, and sleep health, to name a few. This external investment in the school's work leads to research prominence: Our faculty and staff serve as principal investigators on approximately 150 active and pending research studies and are collaborators on dozens of research studies around the globe.

As the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) research strategic plan pivots to addressing health equity and advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (source: <https://www.ninr.nih.gov/aboutninr/ninr-mission-and-strategic-plan>), the UW School of Nursing aims to train scholars prepared to excel in these fields.

For instance, faculty member Cindy Dougherty, M.S., Ph.D. '90, ARNP, is collaborating with Ph.D. student Judy Kwan to investigate heart disease patients' reactions to palliative care, an element of Judy's research interests in



A COMMITMENT TO HEALTH EQUITY

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end-of-life care for people with implantable cardioverter defibrillators. In another example, Ph.D. student Teresa Van Winkle and her mentor, faculty member Molly Altman, Ph.D., M.N. '05, MPH '06, are developing a survey to assess the level of respect LGBTQ2S+ community receive during pregnancy and childbirth — the first study of its kind. They're also exploring innovative ways to recruit participants so that all identities and intersections are adequately represented in the study. Lastly, faculty member Kerry Redding, Ph.D. '08, MPH, BSN, partnered with Ph.D. student Alexi Vasbinder on her dissertation to provide a greater understanding of mechanisms for fatigue and cardiovascular disease in breast cancer patients treated with radiation.

Once they leave university, these graduates have the potential to influence health even more broadly. Empowered by their UW education, many return to communities that will benefit from their scholarship. After completing her dissertation, for instance, Hebah Almulla returned to her country of origin, Saudi Arabia, as a faculty member. There, she conducts research on the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for better public health messages. She is using her findings to minimize risk of transmission and illness in her community.

Other graduates, like Tatiana Sadak, Ph.D. '11, lead educational initiatives. Now serving as an associate professor and graduate program director at the UW School of Nursing, Dr. Sadak is leading innovative educational programs that benefit students, such as a curriculum re-envisioning to integrate more upstream health solutions into students' learning.

The regional and global impact of UW Nursing Ph.D. students — their ability to address some of the world's most pressing health challenges — is nearly limitless. With the creation of the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project, our goal is to remove the barriers that stand in the way of these promising doctoral candidates.



ADDRESSING POLICY: Scholarship Recipient Rita Ismail, Ph.D. '14

"Nursing programs in the U.S. are the best, and the UW is No. 1 in the country," says Rita Ismail, Ph.D. '14. After she graduated, she returned to the Republic of Indonesia, where she works in the Ministry of Health. Ismail and her colleagues recently published an article on the stigma experienced by Indonesian women living with HIV.

"Coming to the UW allowed me to learn how to do good, community-based research that could be applied to policymaking," says Ismail.

The Challenges of Educating NURSE-SCIENTISTS

Although Ph.D.-educated nurses make an incredible impact on the health of our communities through research and education, they also face significant challenges — as does the nursing field as a whole.

By 2025, Washington state is projected to have a shortage of 7,000 registered nurses; it will rank 45th among the 50 states for available nursing staff. At the same time, a significant number of Ph.D.-educated nursing faculty nationwide, who are critical to training nurses, are reaching retirement age.

In the most recent National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice report, it was estimated that nearly 1 in 3 nursing faculty members active in 2015 will retire by 2025. Unfortunately, there are not sufficient up-and-coming doctorally trained educators to fill the teaching spaces they will leave. If the school does not have sufficient new faculty to train nursing students, we risk further limiting the capacity of our degree programs and restricting our ability to fill the gaps created by the nursing shortage.

The gaps left by this aging of the workforce will also affect the field of health care research. Nurse-scientists often focus on research topics that address a whole-person, holistic view of care. Accordingly, many of them examine quality-of-life issues — cognition, culture, mental health, productivity — involved in identifying, treating, and living with disease. Nursing science also frequently focuses on the prevention of illness. Losing these researchers, without having a new generation to fill those roles, will take a toll on the future of human health.

In addition to increasing the number of Ph.D. nurses available to take on vital teaching and research roles, the UW School of Nursing has an additional goal: making our doctoral pool deeper and more diverse.

THE NEED FOR DIVERSITY

The school's mission — in research, in practice, in cultivating leaders — is intended to address health and health care for everyone. The UW School of Nursing must respond to the knowledge that racism is a public health crisis while addressing health inequities that result in health inequalities, as these disproportionately impact populations of color.

This commitment is reflected by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. In a position statement on DEI in academic nursing, the association points to two key signs of educational success: when programs value and depend on learning from individuals with diverse life experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds; and when programs address pervasive inequities in health care by preparing nurses and other healthcare professionals to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse American society.

The association and the UW School of Nursing know the stakes are high. Today, an estimated 60% of the patient population in the U.S. identify as people of color, while only about 20% of registered and 17% of nursing faculty identify as such. Further, the school is well aware that populations of color (and people who have varying gender identities, nativity and documentation status, abilities, and other intersecting identities) have been historically excluded and chronically underserved in healthcare. There has never been a more critical time to address these inequities through the education and training of nurse-scientists and nursing faculty.

By preparing and hiring people from a variety of backgrounds and cultures to become nursing faculty, the school can focus on teaching nursing students to provide care to diverse patient populations in anti-biased, anti-racist, and culturally humble ways.

Fortunately, the school's Ph.D. applicant pool is diverse. In 2020, 60% of applicants to the Ph.D. program identified as non-white, 39% of which identified as international students.

Similarly, people who need better, more equitable health care will benefit from nursing research led by nurse-scientists with shared racial and/or ethnic perspective and lived experience. The school intends to develop a cadre of nurse-scientists from underrepresented groups who will go on to lead in the immediate and long-term future of nursing research and practice.

But recruitment and retention of all Ph.D. candidates, including students of color, comes with a price: the average cost of training a Ph.D. student is \$65,000 per year, a cost that leaves a nursing degree out of reach for many excellent prospective students.

To recruit top candidates, particularly candidates from diverse backgrounds, we must bolster the funding support that we can offer our students.

THE NEED FOR FINANCIAL AID

At present, the UW School of Nursing offers partial support to some students, with fully funded recruitment packages offered to only one or two accepted applicants each year. This lack of robust financial aid — and the looming threat of a loan-based debt load — poses a dilemma for many prospective students and graduates. In considering a potential doctorate, they may:

Factor in their current debt load. Ph.D. students typically enter the program already having accrued debt from earlier degrees. Without significant financial aid, they will need to take on more debt to obtain their Ph.D.

Lose significant income. Some students apply for a Ph.D. program after working full-time for many years; the loss of that income, and often the loss of health benefits, can pose drastic changes to their financial situation.

Veer away from research and teaching. While the school's goal is to foster the creation of much-needed researchers and teachers, high costs and loan debt lead some graduates to pursue more lucrative roles elsewhere.

Be considering this compounding factor: the high cost of living in the Puget Sound region.

The financial burden of debt rests disproportionately on students of color; while they represent 50% of our Ph.D. students, they carry 88% of the group's total loan debt. With higher financial barriers on average, students of color may be at higher risk of not pursuing, or not completing, their Ph.D. International students — many of whom also identify as students of color — face a similar challenge. These candidates are not eligible for U.S. federal aid, and students from low-resource countries often receive no support from their country of origin.



FOSTERING INCLUSION: Scholarship Recipient Sanithia Parker, BA '01, Ph.D. '24

"I'd almost given up on my medical dreams when I met a Ph.D. nurse focused on population health," says Ph.D. candidate Sanithia Parker. "Today, she's my mentor."

Parker, who is holding down a job and raising two young children while going to school, has dreams for her future.

"Our African American communities are rich in knowledge and experience," she says. "I'd like to work with them to address health inequities."

If we are to recruit more students of color and foster a more diverse Ph.D. student body, one that can continue to have a tremendous and beneficial impact on health in the Puget Sound region and around the world, we must offer more funding to alleviate students' financial burdens. **We must, with the partnership of a generous community, bring the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project to fruition.**

OUR VISION: The Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project

The UW School of Nursing intends to elevate health care: to recruit doctoral candidates who will help create a diverse, culturally competent workforce; to train and retain teachers who will serve as role models and mentors for generations of nurses; and to educate investigators who will broaden and advance research in order to meet the needs of their communities.

With this dream, our goal is to make nursing care more humane, more innovative, and more accessible to everyone who needs it, especially to people — here and abroad — who bear a disproportionate burden of illness and injury.

In order to meet these ambitious goals, the **UW School of Nursing is creating the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project**, a scholarship program that aims to provide full funding packages to all our Ph.D. students and recruit and retain diverse cohorts of students. To do so, we are building an endowment totaling \$188 million that will support student tuition and other costs associated with acquiring a graduate degree. As a result, we know that our students (and the nursing profession) will reap numerous rewards.

THE IMPACT OF \$188 MILLION

If the UW School of Nursing can raise \$188 million to fund the Dream Project, these funds will have a permanent and very beneficial impact on Ph.D. students' educations.

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 \$188 \text{ million} & \times & 3.6\%^{**} & = & \$6.8 \text{ million} \\
 & & \text{distribution rate for} & & \text{to support Ph.D. students} \\
 & & \text{endowed funds} & &
 \end{array}$$



20
students

\times



\$65,000*
in educational
expenses per year

\times



5
years

$=$

\$6.5 million*
to support Ph.D. students

* EDUCATIONAL COSTS EXPECTED TO INCREASE BY AN AVERAGE OF 3% ANNUALLY.

**THE UW CONSOLIDATED ENDOWMENT FUND (CEF) SPENDING POLICY AUTHORIZES THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM THE CEF TO SUPPORT THE PURPOSE OF THE ENDOWED FUND. THE ENDOWMENT SPENDING RATE IS SET BY THE BOARD OF REGENTS.

THE IMMEDIATE BENEFITS

The creation of the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project will have numerous immediate benefits.

Students searching for an excellent doctoral nursing program will be strongly attracted to the life- and career-changing prospect of a “full ride” to graduate school at the University of Washington.

This visionary student support fund will eliminate some Ph.D. students’ fears of acquiring or increasing loan debt. It will remove financial barriers for those who are worried about the financial impact of leaving full-time employment. It will also give hope to candidates who think that graduate school is financially out of reach.

We expect a robust recruitment package to bring in more interested candidates, and we hope that it will help attract an array of students from various backgrounds, with different work and educational histories, and with a variety of racial, cultural, and socioeconomic perspectives.

The creation of the endowment will also level the playing field for the UW School of Nursing, allowing us to offer recruitment packages that rival those of our peer schools. The excellence of our endowment would, at long last, reflect the high regard in which our institution is held.

THE LONG-TERM REWARDS

The creation of the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project will also benefit local and global communities for generations to come.

Support for nursing Ph.D.s will bolster the pipeline of nursing educators, who are crucial to closing the health care gaps caused by the nursing shortage. Further, the ability to invest in Ph.D. students of color will not only allow for more comprehensive, culturally competent nursing care that reflects the increasingly diverse patient population they serve, but will also create more teachers and role models who can inspire youth of color to enter and thrive in the field of nursing. And, of course, we eagerly anticipate the life-changing, whole-person-focused research initiated by the next generation of nurse researchers.

We know that an endowment of this size cannot be created overnight. Rather, it will be created through the visionary generosity of our community, one gift and one donor at a time. We invite you to invest in the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project.



RESEARCHING HEALTH LITERACY: Scholarship Recipient Johnny Nguyen, BSN '18, Ph.D. '27

“When I went to the UW’s Nurse Camp in summer 2015, I became intrigued by what nursing had to offer,” says student Johnny Nguyen. “It was an amazing opportunity, especially for kids like me, who were from disadvantaged backgrounds.”

What does he want to do, post-graduation? “My hope is to go into public health, to do translational science, and to advance programs that create healthy communities,” Nguyen says. “I want to use my research to better understand (and maybe improve) the health literacy of Vietnamese Americans.”

YOUR Investment

In establishing the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project, we are creating a \$188 million endowment at the UW School of Nursing. Endowment funds are invested in perpetuity, and quarterly distributions from these invested gifts provide a steady, reliable source of financial support to Ph.D. students for generations to come.

We would be delighted if you joined us in making an investment in the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project. We offer multiple giving options for you to consider.

CREATING YOUR OWN ENDOWMENT

Creating a Ph.D. student support endowment at the University of Washington requires a minimum commitment of \$50,000 and has the additional benefit of allowing you to name your fund after your family, a mentor, or a loved one. Below, we offer two endowment levels that would be invaluable to our students.

Creating a \$1.8 million endowment.

This level of gift would fund one student's full training costs per year in perpetuity.

Creating a \$900,000 endowment.

This level of gift would fund half of one student's training costs per year in perpetuity.

MAKING A GIFT TO THE EXISTING ENDOWMENT

We also welcome gifts of any size to the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project Endowed Student Support Fund.

WAYS TO GIVE

There are multiple convenient ways to contribute to the UW School of Nursing. You may write a check, make a multi-year pledge, contribute securities, or make a gift in your will or through another planned giving vehicle. We would be pleased to discuss these giving options with you.

For More INFORMATION

With your donation to the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project, you will invest not only in our students' futures as nursing leaders, educators, and researchers, but also in patient-centered, whole-person care for patients in our region and around the world.

If you would like to make a gift or to learn more about the Nursing Ph.D. Dream Project, please contact Jenny Vincent, associate director for advancement, at jennywh@uw.edu or 206-616-0889.

Thank you very much for your interest in the future of nursing.