



**BLESSING-RIEMAN**

*College of Nursing & Health Sciences*

# The Pulse

brcn.edu



alumni magazine

2026

Annual Winter Edition



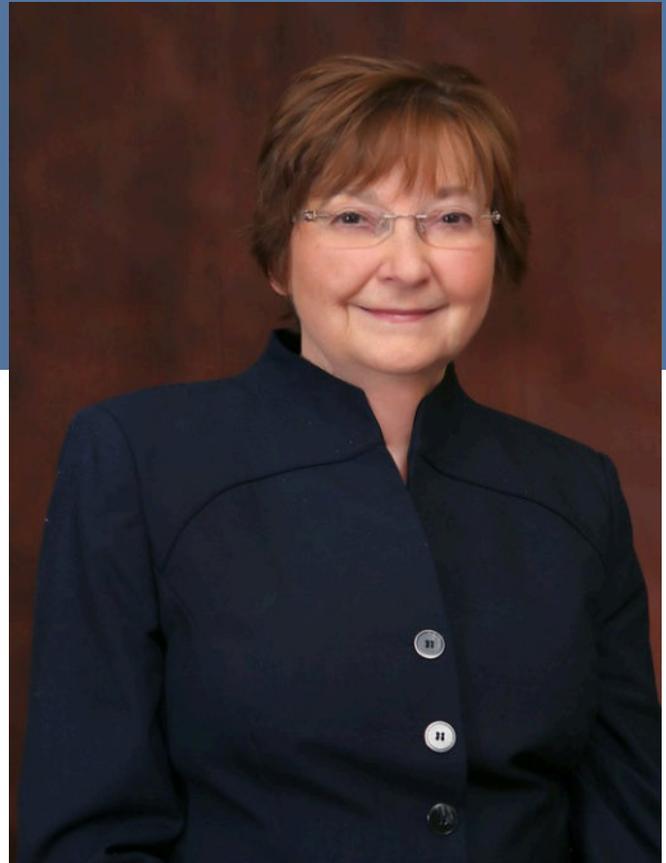
# President's Letter

*Dr. Brenda K.  
Beshears*

## *Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences President/CEO*

I bring you greetings at this wonderful time of the year. We have many positive things happening within the walls of the College! This positivity includes increasing enrollment, excellent retention, and high student satisfaction. As you know, our mission to provide excellence in education is continually being shown by our graduates. As we observe and learn about all the incredible work our alumni are doing, faculty and staff have a strong sense of pride.

We could not accomplish our mission without the support from each of you. We are grateful for all the ways you stay engaged through mentoring our students and new graduates, serving on advisory boards, as well as monetary support.



We are excited about the future!  
Thank you for staying connected and  
carrying our values wherever you find  
yourself.

Warmly,

*Brenda*

Dr. Brenda K. Beshears  
President/CEO



# BNAA President

*Shaila  
O'Dear*

## *Blessing Nurses Alumni Association President*

Hello!

I hope the new year is treating you well. As we look ahead to spring, the BNAA Board is excited to plan several opportunities for our alumni to gather, reconnect, and support our mission. One of our most anticipated events, the Annual Alumni Banquet, will be held on Saturday, April 25th at the Holiday Inn in Quincy, IL. Additional details, including registration information, will be shared soon along with a formal invitation—we hope you'll plan to join us.

We are also excited to announce that Goat Yoga will be returning this spring! The date has been set for May 2, 2026. We are grateful for the incredible support shown at last year's event, which raised over \$800 to support BNAA initiatives. More information will be shared as plans come together, and we hope you'll consider joining us again.

Another important tradition we are continuing is the BNAA Nurse of the Year Award. This honor would not be possible without nominations from alumni like you. We encourage you to email [alumni@brcn.edu](mailto:alumni@brcn.edu) to nominate a nurse who demonstrates excellence in nursing practice. The selected recipient will be recognized at the Alumni Banquet, receive complimentary admission and dinner, have their nomination story shared during the ceremony, and be presented with a commemorative plaque.

In addition, we are pleased to welcome Joan Ruhs as the incoming BNAA President this January. We are grateful for her willingness to serve and look forward to her leadership in the year ahead.

Thank you for your continued support and for the outstanding work you do each day to uphold the integrity of the nursing profession.

Shaila O'Dear, MSN, RN, CEN, CNEcI  
BNAA President

# MAY GRADUATION

Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences recognized 48 students at the May Commencement Ceremony held on Friday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at The Crossing Church in Quincy, Illinois.

- 30 Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- 10 Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Sciences
- 1 Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Care
- 2 Associate of Science in Medical Laboratory Technology
- 5 Master of Science in Nursing



## Faculty Outstanding Student Award

Nursing - Allison Wessel  
Radiology - Sydney Clark  
Respiratory - Danielle Redington

## Student Council Senior Recognition Award

Daxtun Heier

## Pi Pi Student Award for Outstanding Student Performance

Clinical Nursing Practice - Jordan Lepper  
Leadership - Julia Mincher



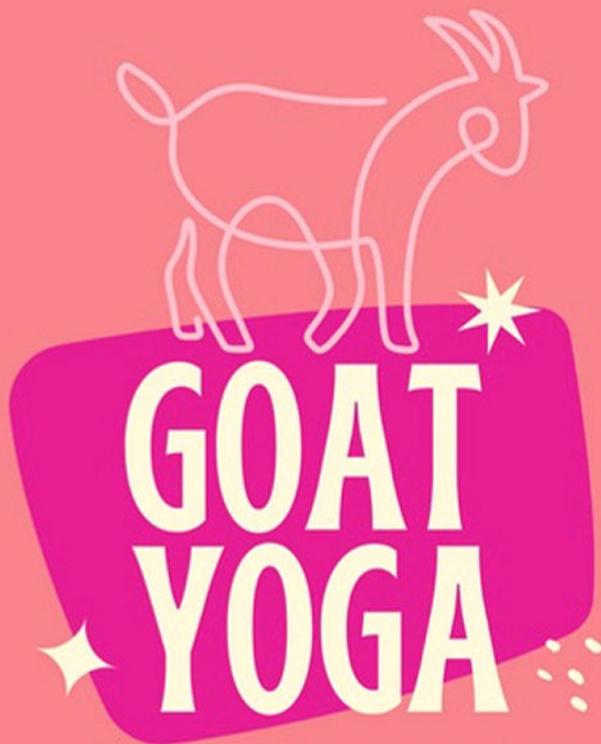
*Congratulations Graduates!*

BNA A EVENT:

# GOAT YOGA 2025

The Blessing Nurses Alumni Association held their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Goat Yoga event on May 3, 2025. Baby goats joined youth and adults for an afternoon of yoga and lots of laughs on the campus of Blessing-Rieman College.

Goat Yoga is coming *baaaa-ck* Spring 2026!



SPONSORED BY BLESSING  
NURSES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

BAAAAA-CK BY POPULAR  
DEMAND

**SATURDAY**  
**MAY 2, 2026**

FAMILY FRIENDLY CLASS  
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

ADULTS ONLY CLASS  
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

AT BLESSING-RIEMAN COLLEGE OF  
NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
3609 N MARX DRIVE QUINCY IL. 62305

**SIGN-UP COMING SOON!**

# Pi Pi 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



Congratulations to the following sixteen new members inducted into the 26<sup>th</sup> Class of the Pi Pi Chapter Honor Society.

Undergraduate Students; Malia Carmack, Laura Garrett, Natalie Gilbert, Amelia Ham, Hannah Howell, Taylor Howell, Ragon Longden, Alayna Vela and Kyle Warning.

Registered Nurse Students; Katherine Couch, Minerva Gibson, Lexi Schaffer, Kaitlin Shackleton and Lindsay Young.

Graduate Students and Nurse Leaders; Madison Doane and Brianne Haschemeyer.

# Sigma Theta Tau

The Pi Pi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing held their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on October 16<sup>th</sup> at Spring Lake Country Club in Quincy. Formed on April 6, 2000, Blessing-Rieman College's Pi Pi Chapter is the 398<sup>th</sup> chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing.

During the ceremony five members were recognized for excellence.

- Dr. Lacey Petersen EdD, MSN, RN for Excellence in Leadership.
- Dr. Jan Akright PhD, RN for Excellence in Leadership.
- Dr. Josey Harris EdD, MSN, RN for Excellence in Education.
- Susan McReynolds MSN, RN, CNE was presented the Charter Chapter Member Recognition.
- Not Pictured: Connie Scott, RN (retired) was presented the Charter Chapter Member Recognition.





# You are Cordially Invited

to attend the Annual Blessing Nurses Alumni Banquet

Come and celebrate with the classes of 1976 and 2026

Saturday, April 25, 2026 | 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Dinner served at 6pm  
Holiday Inn 4821 Oak Street,  
Quincy, IL 62305 (banquet room)

RSVP by April 10th—no late reservations please! \$30 per person  
**1976 and 2026 Graduates are free** (additional charge for guests)

[Online option to pay at www.brcn.edu/billpay](http://www.brcn.edu/billpay)

To make donations to the Blessing Alumni Scholarship Fund, checks must be made payable to The Blessing Foundation.  
*(We need your continued support to be able to offer educational programs and assist students)*

**Please return the attached  
Annual Alumni Banquet Reservation Card  
by April 10th**

Mail Attached Reservation Card & Check to:  
BRCN Alumni Banquet 3609 N. Marx Drive, Quincy, IL 62305  
or contact Melissa Cummins at 217-228-5520 ext. 6958 or by email at [alumni@brcn.edu](mailto:alumni@brcn.edu)

Please make checks payable to: **Blessing Nurses' Alumni Association**

For any questions about the Blessing Nurses Alumni Banquet, please contact:  
Joan Ruhs, BNAA President 217-228-5520 ext. 6973, [RuhsJ@brcn.edu](mailto:RuhsJ@brcn.edu)



## Nominations Open for the **BNAA NURSE OF THE YEAR**

Do you know a nurse who demonstrates excellence in nursing practice? We encourage you to nominate a nurse for the 2026 BNAA Nurse of the Year Award. The selected recipient will be recognized at the Alumni Banquet and receive complimentary admission and dinner.

**Email [alumni@brcn.edu](mailto:alumni@brcn.edu) for a nomination form. Nominations are due by April 10, 2026.**



## Faculty Highlight

### *Susan McReynolds*

MSN, RN, CNE

#### **How many years have you been working as a nurse and what areas have you worked in?**

I have been working as a nurse for 30 years. When I graduated from BRCN in 1995 I worked at Lewis Co. Health Dept. for 6 years. I decided I wanted to teach, so I worked in Med-Surg at BH for 6 years to gain some clinical experience. During most of that time on 2400, I did BRCN Clinical Adjunct. I completed my Masters from SIU-E in May 2007 and have worked full time at BRCN since.

#### **Why did you choose nursing as a career?**

I worked as a secretary and then became a mother. Over the years I found that I appreciated and admired the care that was given to me and my family members by nurses, so I decided I wanted to be like them! My son started Kindergarten and I started Nursing School the same day.

“

*Appreciate the opportunities you have here at BRCN to “think outside of the box”. When I graduated from nursing school, I received a card with the phrase “If you can dream it, you can achieve it”. That has always stuck with me and gives me courage. Also, sometimes remembering that “This, too, shall pass” and drawing on the strength of The Serenity Prayer.*

SUSAN

#### **How long have you been a member of the BRCN faculty and what courses have you taught?**

I worked as an Adjunct beginning in 2003-2007 doing clinical instruction (mostly on med-surg). In 2007 when I earned my Masters, I started teaching in the classroom in addition to doing clinical. I have taught: Pharmacology, Nutrition, Stress Management, Nursing Concepts I (NSG320), Professionalism, Capstone, and Health Assessment. I also co-taught Healthcare & Nursing in London, Service Learning for Life with Travel to the Dominican Republic and co-created and taught The Art of Nursing.

#### **What do you enjoy teaching most and why?**

Every course is so different making it difficult to choose a particular favorite. The travel courses were lots of fun (along with The Art of Nursing) because I had the opportunity to not only teach – but learn as well! I loved helping to give students a variety of cultural opportunities and expose them to the ideals of “service”.

**What is the most rewarding part of your job?**

I have been fortunate to have been able to teach students during their first semester in our program (Health Assessment) and then being with them at the end of their Senior year for Professionalism and Capstone. This provides me the opportunity to see how they have “grown” over the years and developed their identity of “being a nurse”.



**You are very active within the Pi Pi chapter of Sigma Theta Tau. Tell us a little about your involvement within the organization.**

I was fortunate to have developed many great relationships with my instructors when I graduated from BRCN, so when someone decided to start the process to bring a Sigma chapter to BRCN, I was invited to be a part of the steering committee. That was about 30 years ago and through that process and the opportunities I had for networking and being mentored by many strong leaders, Pi Pi has become a part of my being! I have held many leadership positions within Pi Pi and I also spent a term as Regional Coordinator (working with all Illinois & Missouri chapters) from 2019-2021. I love the fact that Sigma is truly international, and I have the opportunity to network with and learn from other nurses all over the world!



**What do you enjoy doing outside of work? Any hobbies, activities, family?**

I enjoy traveling, golfing, crafting, cooking, gardening, and spending time with family and friends.

**What's a fun fact about you we wouldn't know?**

My first official “IV sticks” were on sheep! My father-in-law raised sheep and we would draw blood from them to sell to a lab in St. Louis to make agar plates.

**What do you look forward to doing following your retirement in May?**

On the top of my bucket list is driving down the west coast of the U.S. I would like to start in Seattle, WA and end in San Diego, CA. It may have to be done in two trips, though! Then, my husband would like to travel the East Coast! We will see...



# Student Council

Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing and Health Sciences' Student Council provided lots of activities throughout the year for students, faculty and staff.

Many activities brought students together including painting rocks and shells in May and sidewalk chalk decorating in August.

Student council's popular campus-wide tie-dye day event was held in September. Students, faculty, and staff were invited to tie-dye BRCN t-shirts.



Faculty and staff received Valentine's Day gift baskets from Student Council on Valentine's Day. Baskets were filled with goodies and Valentine themed items.



Student council members spread the joy of the holiday season by delivering Christmas cards.



## MSN Program

### Expand Your Opportunities

Registered nurses with a bachelor's degree can complete a Master of Science in Nursing degree through BRCN with 100% online coursework. Students can choose between two concentrations, Administration or Education.

BRCN's Master of Science in Nursing program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and requires 42 to 44 hours of online course work with in-person practicum hours.

Apply online at [brcn.edu](http://brcn.edu) and expand your horizons!



# Meet **JASON MURPHY & SHELBY DEMINT**



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

*Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences graduates Jason Murphy and Shelby DeMint have taken to the sky in their nursing careers.*

*Both currently work for the Air Evac Team 5 in Quincy, Illinois where Flight Nurse Shelby recently completed 100 patient flights, earning her a new set of wings. She was presented her new wings by BCL Jason Murphy in November of '25 who had also presented Shelby her 50<sup>th</sup> patient flight wings in April.*



### *Jason Murphy ...*

**As a child, what did you want to grow up to be and when did you decide on a career in nursing?**

When I was in high school, I wanted to be a police officer. I made the decision to pursue a career in nursing after working in law enforcement and corrections for a few years. I continue to hold a peace officer license and assist as a reserve deputy.

**When did you graduate and what degrees do you currently have?**

I have graduated from BRCN twice. I enrolled in a hybrid online & in seat RN to BSN program through BRCN and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2016. The hybrid online & in seat format made attending easy. In this program I was introduced to the students and graduates of BRCN, and I decided that I would like to obtain a Nurse Practitioner license. BRCN was in the process of developing a NP program at the time and I enrolled in the Master of

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

*Jason Murphy*

Nursing degree program at BRCN with the goal of making a smooth transition into the NP program when it was up and running. After two years I had found out the local market did not support a NP program, and the college had made the business decision to abandon the program. I subsequently completed the Master of Science in Nursing Education. I have earned the following certificates and degrees throughout my life.

- Certificate in Law Enforcement - MACC
- Firefighter - Basic
- EMT - Basic - MACC
- Associate Degree Nursing - MACC
- Associate of Arts General Studies - MACC
- Bachelor of Science Nursing - BRCN
- RN to Paramedic - MCAD
- Master of Science Nursing Education - BRCN
- Commercial Pilot - Airplane Single Engine, Multi Engine & Instrument.
- Flight Instructor - Airplane Single Engine, Multi Engine & Instrument.

## **Where have you worked since graduating from BRCN and in what capacity?**

I worked as a flight nurse prior to and after graduating from BRCN.

## **What lead you to a career as a flight nurse and how has BRCN prepared you?**

My career path certainly follows a nontraditional route. In high school I had the desire to enter public service as a police officer. After graduating high school, I attended the Moberly Area Community College's Law Enforcement Training Center graduating class 06-01. I had subsequently earned an Associate of Applied Science in Law Enforcement. After a few years had passed, I had the feeling it was time for a change in the direction that my life was headed. I was moved by being part of the rescue and resuscitation efforts of a young child who had drowned in a pond. After successfully resuscitating the child, the child was flown by helicopter to the regional trauma center. It was at that moment I knew that is what I wanted to do. I enrolled in community college and worked part time as a law enforcement officer to complete that goal. 50 students enrolled, 17 graduated from the class. BRCN has developed my career through both education as well as presenting networking opportunities which allow me to remain engaged with the community.

## **What is your current position and what future goals do you have?**

I am currently a Flight Nurse & Base Clinical Lead. The duties of a flight nurse are pretty obvious; you prepare for and participate in direct patient care and clinical documentation. The duties of a clinical lead are a little vaguer. I participate in staff development, coordinate the onboarding process of new flight crew members, coordinate outreach education, organize base schedules, and maintain some of the records around the base to name a few things. Future goals are a tough one... I would like to get myself in a position where I am better able to provide for the needs of my family as well as be there for them. If I were to "advance" my career it would require that I transition to a non-clinical position which is something that I do not desire at this point.

## **How long have you and Shelby been working together?**

Shelby and I have worked together for the last 18 months. I was her Nurse/Paramedic preceptor during her 6-month onboarding process.

## **Any fun memories or experiences the two of you have shared?**

One thing that I say about this line of work is it is an adventure every day. You truly never know where you will be or what you will be doing. One time we received an inter-facility transfer to Chicago. We were unable to land at the receiving facility. Our dispatch made arrangements for ground transport from a private heliport in downtown



Chicago to the receiving facility. Upon returning we were talking with the line guys who decided to show us their rental cars. Imagine the bottom tier of rental car in your line up being a Rolls Royce or Lamborghini. There was an entire garage of exotic sports cars as a rental fleet.

## **What is the most rewarding part of your job and what is the most challenging?**

Some of the more rewarding parts of the career occur when you get someone to a receiving facility and you get the feedback that they did well afterwards. A lot of the time this would be by a card

## Jason Murphy...

that had been mailed to the base. There are many challenging aspects to this career. First is the unpredictable nature. You may work for 24 hours straight, or you may find yourself going stir crazy during downtime. I practiced skills, worked on my degrees and studied for my pilot certificates. Another challenging aspect of the career is people who have not worked in the environment have a difficult time understanding the unique challenges associated with working in an aircraft. For example, after the patient is in the aircraft; you have access to your patient from the nipple line up. Simply talking with your patient can be difficult because you cannot hear them or they cannot hear you. You cannot use a stethoscope wearing a helmet or due to ambient noise.

### **Do you have an experience working as a flight nurse that has helped shape you in your profession?**

I cannot say there was a particular experience which shaped me as a flight nurse. People are a

culmination of their life experiences both good and bad. We have a duty reflect upon those experiences learn from them and provide the best care possible going forward.

### **Are you married or have children? Pets?**

I am married to my wife Kristen (also a BRCN Graduate). We have 3 children Jaden (16), Elijah (14), and Scarlett (5). My wife stays at home. Without her I would not be able to do this line of work. We have a cat, Theo; three parakeets Pearl, Cloud, and Stormy, and a few jumping spiders.

### **What do you enjoy doing outside of work?**

Outside of work as a flight nurse, I currently provide flight instruction. At the time of this writing, I have 16 private pilot candidates, 2 instrument candidates, 2 commercial candidates, and 2 flight instructor candidates. My goal for this coming year; I would like to get a glider certificate to expand my pilot privileges. I want to try skydiving at least once; I am a chapter officer of the local Experimental Aircraft Association, and I am building an airplane.

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

### *Shelby DeMint*

### **As a child, what did you want to grow up to be and when did you decide on a career in nursing?**

For as long as I can remember, I wanted to be a veterinarian when I grew up. I was obsessed with dogs but then realized that vets care for other animals as well and nixed that career path. I started college at the University of Minnesota as a bioproducts and biosystems engineering major, hoping to one day create plastic that would degrade in seawater. However, I quickly decided that research and development labs are quite lonely and boring. By October of my freshman year of college, I was praying to God for guidance on what to do instead. All of the sudden, I couldn't stop thinking about how much I had enjoyed volunteering at a memory care facility while in high school. I had never considered any career in the medical field previously, but suddenly nursing just seemed so right. The decision to swap majors made me feel so calm in the midst of all my coming-of-age confusion. I transferred to BRCN as a sophomore and the rest is history.



### **Tell us about your college experience at BRCN and what degrees do you currently have?**

I transferred into BRCN as a sophomore in the BSN program. I loved immediately being hands on with patients in clinicals. In fact, sophomore year clinicals were the first time I ever stepped foot in a hospital! While at BRCN, I was able to be a board member of SNO, work as a tutor, and sit on the academic committee. I graduated summa cum laude with my BSN in May of 2021, and since have obtained some additional certifications including Adult/Adolescent Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner and Certified Flight Registered Nurse.

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

*Shelby DeMint*

## Where have you worked since graduating from BRCN and in what capacity?

My first job as a new grad nurse was at Blessing Hospital in the emergency department. I worked there about three and a half years before applying to AirEvac in fall of 2024.

## What led you to a career as a flight nurse and how has BRCN helped prepare you?

Just like I never planned on being a nurse at all, I never really planned on being a flight nurse. In nursing school, I wanted to work in geriatrics or psych up until I did my internship in the emergency department my junior year at BRCN. Taking the critical care elective my senior year of school really sealed the deal for me. I was addicted to the adrenaline of the emergency department and knew that's where I needed to be upon graduating. Working in the ER, I would see the flight crews come in and was super jealous. Flight nursing looked like an insanely fun, yet challenging adventure. In the summer of 2024, I started working with a new NP in the ED who had been a flight nurse previously, and she suggested I might be good at it...but I wasn't sure. I still felt like a baby nurse with tons to learn! It was my fiancé who finally convinced me to apply to AirEvac after much encouragement.

## What is your current position and what future goals do you have?

Being a flight nurse was my goal for a long time, and I've now achieved that, but I haven't completely abandoned it as a goal. I have so much room to grow in this position still. Right now, I'm working to stretch myself to be more comfortable sitting in the left seat and performing tasks that are more traditionally performed by a medic. As far as far off future goals, I've considered pursuing the NP path. I just want to stay focused on the present for now.



## Do you have a fun experience you've had while working with Jason Murphy that comes to mind?

Our base doesn't fly to Chicago very often, but Jason and I did once last year. It was a long flight, but we stopped in Peoria to get gas and Jason taught me where they hide their cookie dough. When we got to Chicago, the airport we landed at was really cool. It had a luxury rental car service, and they let us explore the stock. Then of course I have so many conglomerate memories of laughs back at base. From using AI to write songs about Jason's love of tacos to having Jason help me pick out a wedding dress, we have tons of fun between calls.

## What is the most rewarding part of your job and what is the most challenging?

The autonomy I have is extremely rewarding. I have protocols for guidance, but the decision making and critical thinking I do on flights is light years beyond anything I did as a bedside nurse. It really feels like I'm making a difference in patient outcomes. The most challenging aspect of my job is the physical space and lack of access to the patient. The head, arms, and chest are really all I can reach unless I want to crawl on top of the patient to get to their abdomen or legs. Plus, it's super loud in flight, so it can be hard to communicate with the patient. Tasks like neuro assessments can be very difficult to complete.





*Shelby DeMint...*



**Tell us about a memorable experience working as a flight nurse that has helped shape you in your profession.**

Summer is trauma season for us, and I'll never forget my first really sick trauma scene response. We responded to an MVC, and our patient had a partial amputation of her right arm. When we got there, the first thing I saw was a mangled piece of metal that used to be a car and a pool of blood underneath it. The patient had a heart rate in the 150s and a systolic blood pressure in the 70s, so we had some work to do. In flight, we were a flurry of plasma, blood, TXA, and levophed. When we got to the ED, my partner and I joked that we looked like we just got out of a pool, dropping in sweat with how hard we were working in the 90+ degree heat. Yet, it was all worth it because we delivered a patient with stable vitals all within normal limits. I felt so proud of my team, that we were able to make such a difference in such a short period of time.

**Are you married or have children? Pets?**

I'm getting married in May of 2027! I met my fiancé Dalton when I worked in the ER and have been obsessed ever since. We have two dogs that we consider our children - Carl and Remmy. They are ornery but too cute to ever be mad at.



**What do you enjoy doing outside of work?**

I love being active, so lifting weights and going on walks are a daily occurrence. I rope Dalton and the dogs in on these whenever possible. I also love to read, bake, and play guitar to relax. We just bought a house a year ago, so a lot of my free time is taken up by home projects. I love creating a space that's 100% me, full of thrifted treasures. Hitch work gives me entire weeks off at a time, so I also love to travel and explore new cultures.

**What's a fun fact about you we wouldn't know?**

I am the regional expert on chicken strips. I have a running log since 2024 ranking all of the strips I've tried.

**Any "words of wisdom" for others looking at a career in health care, specifically, as a flight nurse?**

Age (or years of experience) is just a number. I got teased my entire nursing career for being young and looking even younger. That's part of the reason I wasn't sure if I should apply to AirEvac. I let those comments affect my self-confidence. Luckily my coworkers now are fantastic and remind me daily that it's not just about years of experience. It's about working hard and having a passion to continue to learn and be better every day.



Always stay positive and be kind. It seems like common sense, but healthcare and helicopter EMS specifically, have long hours and high stress environments at times. Energy is additive, and it's easy for one negative comment to spiral into three unhappy crew members on a flight. A good attitude will make all the difference and help prevent burnout.



# Alumni News and Notes

Clairzilla Alexis, BSN '24, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Kealy Atkinson, BSN '24, received the Year One Wonder Award for a new registered nurse during National Nurse Week 2025 and graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Brenda Barton, MSN '16, RN, CCM, took on role of Administrative Director of Quality and Patient Safety in August.

Nancy Beattie, BSN '67, passed away on March 27, 2025.

Laurie Brink, BSN '85, RN, received the DAISY Transformational Leader Award during National Nurse Week.

Eric Byerly, BSN '24, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Tea Cameron, BSN '97, RN, received the DAISY award in September 2025.

Allison Coonrod, BSN '24, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Destiny Craven, BSN '18, psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner, joined Blessing Health Mt. Sterling clinic team in March.

Paula Dabney, BSN '24, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Shelby DeMint, BSN '21, flight nurse with AirEvac has logged 100 patient flights and completed her Advanced Credential Exam as a CFRN (Certified Flight Registered Nurse).

Paige Eckert, BSN '24, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Emily Feenstra, BSN '18, received the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Award during National Nurse Week 2025.

Hanna Folkenroth, BSN '23, RN, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program on March 18, 2025.

Angela Hancox, BSN '95, ADM-RN, retired after 41 years at Blessing Hospital on September 11, 2025.

Kayli Harshman, BSN '23, RN, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program on March 18, 2025.

Juliann Heck, BSN '23, received the Comeback Award: Clin Doc/Rehap/LTC at Blessing in August.

Lara Heinecke, BSN '19, Director of Oncology Services-Cancer Centers was recognized by Blessing Hospital as the Community Award Recipient in September 2025.

# Alumni News and Notes

Charlotte Anderson Horman, BSN '23, transitioned into Nurse Manager position for 3 South/Gen Med in September from her role as Associate Nurse Manager for 2 North/Gen Med Neurology at Blessing Hospital.

Holly Jones, MSN '13, RN, NEA-BS, accepted the position of Vice President/Administrator of Illini Community Hospital & Denman Services.

Conner Kelle, Associate in Res Care '19, received Blessing Hospital's Who's Your Angel Award in October 2025.

Deborah Landacre, BSN '77, RN, member of Blessing Hospital's Blessed Beginnings maternity care unit recognized at the Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative (ILPQC) 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference with the Path to QI Excellence and Promoting Vaginal Birth QI Excellence Awards, the Patient and Community Engagement Champion Award, Prenatal Maternal Health Outstanding Launch Award, and the QI Excellence in the Equitable Safe Sleep in Infants Initiative in November 2025.

Lee Ann Leach, BSN '22, was promoted from Associate Nurse Manager to Nurse Manager of 3 North at Blessing Hospital.

Stormy Leazer, BSN '24, enrolled in Walden University's Master of Science for Family Nurse Practitioner program.

Lisa Liesen, BSN '21, RN, earned national certification in medical-surgical nursing from the American Nurses Credentialing Center in October. (Med-Surg Certified).

Aspen Mueller, BSN '25, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Jaspreet Natt, BSN '24, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Bridget O'Bryan, BSN '22, is obtaining her Nurse Practitioner license.

Sarah O'Laughlin, BSN '11, celebrated her engagement in May with a Jurassic Park themed engagement party. A Colorado wedding is planned for September 2026.



# Alumni News and Notes

Amy Oshner, MSN '20, BSN '07, RN, earned the status of Nurse Executive Board-Certified (NE-BC) from the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

Charlie Purdy '65, passed away in December 2024.

Robin Reis, BSN '12, ANM, RNC-LRN, accepted the position of Associate Nurse Manager for the 4N/Nursery/Postpartum in August and is a Member of Blessing Hospital's Blessed Beginnings maternity care unit recognized at the Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative (ILPQC) 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference with the Path to QI Excellence and promoting Vaginal Birth QI Excellence Awards, the Patient and Community Engagement Champion Award, Perinatal Maternal Health Outstanding Launch Award, and the QI Excellence in the Equitable Safe Sleep in Infants initiative in November 2025.

Kerby Roberts, BRC '24, received the Who's Your Angel Award in October 2025.

Abby Safar, BSN '20, RN, with Surgical Services/Post Anesthesia Care Unit received the ICARE Award in January 2025.

Ryan Schumacher, BSN '10, RN, member of Blessings EP lab team which was awarded Electrophysiology (EP) accreditation by the American College of Cardiology (ACC) for demonstrated expertise in and commitment to treating patients with abnormal heart rhythms. 1 of only 48 ACC accredited facilities in the country.

Alexis (Lexi) Smith, BSN '25, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Kelli Terwelp, BSN '21, received the Laretta M. Eno Distinguished Nurses' Award for Registered Nurses during National Nurse Week 2025.



Kaleigh Roberts, BRT '24, CT technologist, received the ICARE Award for Compassion in February 2025.

Eydie Tipton, MSN '16, BSN '09, RN, DNP, CCRN, CNML, EBP-C, member of a team initiative titled, "Integration of rapid response teams and early warning systems to reduce cardiac arrests and intensive care unit readmissions" that was published in the August 2025 issue of Critical Care Nurse.

# Alumni News and Notes

Abigail Tranor, BSN '25, RN, 3 North surgical unit, received the DAISY award on January 29, 2025, and graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program on March 18, 2025.

Scott Uhlott, BSN '21, RN, earned the status of Nurse Executive Board-Certified (NE-BC) from the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

Lauren Van Tress, BSN '23, RN, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program on March 18, 2025.

Tracy Viers, MSN '17, APRN, AC-AGCNS, member of a team initiative titled, "Integration of rapid response teams and early warning systems to reduce cardiac arrests and intensive care unit readmissions" that was published in the August 2025 issue of Critical Care Nurse.

Chandler Waelder, BSN '24, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Brooke Walbring, BSN '24, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Caleb Weitnauer, BSN '24, graduated from Blessing Hospital's Nurse Residency Program in August 2025.

Laura Wiegand, BSN '13, RN '87, CCRN, member of a team initiative titled, "Integration of rapid response teams and early warning systems to reduce cardiac arrests and intensive care unit readmissions" that was published in the August 2025 issue of Critical Care Nurse.

Vicki Wittland, BSN '93, RN '86, Blessing RN Outpatient Care Coordinator, retired on December 19 after 21 years of service.

Shannon Zanger, BSN '04, RNC-OB, PMH-C, team member of Blessing Hospital's Blessed Beginnings maternity care unit recognized at the Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative (ILPQC) 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference with the Path to QI Excellence and promoting Vaginal Birth QI Excellence Awards, the Patient and Community Engagement Champion Award, Perinatal Maternal Health Outstanding Launch Award, and the QI Excellence in the Equitable Safe Sleep in Infants initiative in November 2025.

**Please share your news!  
Don't forget address changes so the  
newsletter can keep up with you!  
Email: [alumni@brcn.edu](mailto:alumni@brcn.edu) or visit the Alumni  
Update page online at [brcn.edu](http://brcn.edu).**





# EDITH SCHMIEDESKAMP

1940s Graduate of the Blessing Hospital School of Nursing

BY ALBERT BEVERIDGE

The Georgia wintertime bone-chilling cold was unlike anything she had known while growing up in the Flathead Valley of the Rocky Mountains in northwestern Montana. Perhaps it was the humidity. Perhaps it was her expectation that winters in the South would be milder. Or it might have been the damp air seeping in from outside through spaces between the floorboards in the boarding house. Regardless, it was cold, and she was suffering. What was an unmarried young woman from the Great Northwest doing in Crawford County, Georgia, in 1943? Like many Americans, her family had struggled to get by during the Great Depression.

Edith, the seventh of eight children born to Fred and Bertha Schmiedeskamp, grew up on the Flathead (Kootenai-Salish) Indian Reservation in the shadows of the beautiful Mission Mountains of Montana. Both of her parents passed away when she was young, so her options were limited. After high school, she headed to Quincy, Illinois, to live with relatives and attend Blessing Hospital School of Nursing. During the height of the World War II years, many young women went straight from nursing school into the military. Her plans were no different. She attempted to join as a military nurse, but due to health issues, she was not accepted.

Still looking to serve, she continued to seek alternatives. After graduation from Blessing School of Nursing, she was accepted at Peabody School of Nursing in Nashville, Tennessee, for further training in Public Health Nursing.

The State of Georgia was looking for public health nurses at the time and contacted her about positions in Rabun County in the north Georgia mountains and Crawford County in middle Georgia. A 1944 article in a Macon newspaper reported that Abbie Weaver, the director of Public Health Nursing, "located the Montana-born Edith Schmiedeskamp and dispatched her immediately to Roberta.

Counties all over the state were crying for public health nurses at the time, but Mrs. Weaver heeded the call of Crawford because the citizens there have labored with the program from the beginning." The article further described the county's efforts to raise money and acquire a facility for a health center. So, off to middle Georgia Edith Schmiedeskamp went to begin her life's new journey.

At the height of the second World War, the young nurse with a thick German surname who spoke with a funny accent aroused suspicion from some in Roberta. Some mumbled not so quietly that she might be a Nazi spy. Nevertheless, she was a fighter. She pressed on and won over the good people of Crawford County.

The accent issue was compounded by the local vernacular with which she was unfamiliar. Such as the first time she was asked, "Can you carry me to the store?" Of course, the person was requesting a ride in a car, but all Edith could think was "You are too big and heavy for me to pick up and carry anywhere." And it took time to learn the meaning of sayings like "bless your heart."

Her "can-do" pioneer spirit, ingrained from the Montana prairie, was put to use on more than one occasion. One instance stood out to her. When her car got stuck in the sand out in the far reaches of the county, she noticed a house across the dirt road with a cross in the front yard that had recently been burned. The still-sturdy lumber looked like just the thing she needed for leverage to free the stuck vehicle. She and the student nurse riding with her put the wood to good use, and off they went.

According to Edith, the home belonged to a white man who apparently remarried too soon after his wife died, which did not sit well with the Ku Klux Klan.

Seeing the peach trees in spring bloom for the first time in the nearby orchards was a sight that she would talk about for the rest of her life. On subsequent trips back home to Montana in her later years, she would always take with her some delicious Georgia peaches to share with her family.

One of the health issues that kept her from becoming a military nurse required spinal surgery in late 1946. Shortly after the surgery and while she was in recovery at a hospital in Atlanta, the horrible Winecove Hotel fire occurred. Her nursing instincts were in play, and she wanted to assist the injured being brought into the hospital, but all she could do was helplessly lie in her bed and pray for all involved.

The most traumatic event of her forty-year nursing career took place in Crawford County when she sat with a young child dying of tetanus. To this day, I can still hear Edith admonishing me whenever me or one of my boys would get a bad cut: "When was your last tetanus shot?"

Edith remained involved with the Crawford County community for several more years and learned valuable life and vocational lessons that she applied many times over her long nursing career.

Making the move to the vibrant, big city of Atlanta happened when she became the industrial nurse at Kraft Foods in Decatur in 1949. This was a big change from rural Crawford County, but as she had done before it was a challenge to accept and overcome. She worked hard, saved her money, and was able to purchase a new 1951 Ford Tudor sedan. The old sales invoice from Beaudry Ford, which I still have, shows she had to pay an additional \$57.40 for a heater. Apparently, she had come to respect Georgia's winters.

A first cousin of Edith's mother lived in Atlanta and had been there for decades. This cousin and his wife became like parents to Edith and accepted her into their family completely during her time in Roberta and later Atlanta.

Edith kept what she considered to be a deep, dark secret for many years. She was not, in fact, the first member of her family to come to Georgia. Her grandfather made his first visit to the state in the autumn of 1864 with Company B of the 78th Illinois Infantry Regiment.



Having a close relative on the "wrong side" of the March to the Sea was not something Edith felt comfortable sharing with her Georgia friends and associates.

After marriage and a few years off to focus on two young children, Edith went back to work with the state as a public health nurse in Augusta. Her steadfastness never wavered, even in the face of many encounters with moonshiners, drug addicts and dealers, and the menagerie of interesting characters that public health nurses encountered with regularity.

Edith Schmiedeskamp Beveridge was my mother. A Montana girl at heart, her sixty plus years in the great state of Georgia left her with, as Mary Ann Anderson might say, "the Soul of a Southerner."



# CAMPUS NEWS

## Commitment to Care

BRCN's Commitment to Care was held on August 27 at The Crossing Church in Quincy. Keynote speaker, Ryan Penneau challenged attendees "To Show up and say I'm here to do my best, bring my gifts, and serve in this moment".

Following Penneau's presentation, the tradition of the Blessing of the Hands was held.

*"Bless these hands, O god, and grant that from these fingers comes the light of kindness".*



## Nursing Student a Star on the Court

Balancing education and sports is no easy task, but for BRCN senior nursing student and Quincy University basketball player success comes academically and on the court. Better known as "Chomp", Acheampomaa Danso jumped to a career milestone in November with 500 rebounds!



## Radiology Week Welcomed Best-Selling Author Bill Callaway

Junior and senior students in the Radiologic Sciences program had the opportunity to meet and hear from author Bill Callaway during National Radiology Week in November.

Callaway, a #1 best-selling author of the radiography review book used by students nationwide to prepare for the ARRT exam, spoke with students about key Radiologic Sciences concepts and strategies for registry review.

It was an amazing learning experience for BRCN students working toward professional success in the field of medical imaging.

**SAVE  
the DATE**

April 25 Alumni Banquet  
May 2 Goat Yoga  
May 15 Commencement



## 37th Teddy Bear Clinic

The Blessing Teddy Bear Clinic returned for the 37th year on October 5 with a Mario Game theme.

Children ages 3 to 6 were encouraged to bring their favorite teddy bear and visit various stations created by Blessing nursing students. The children learned about dental hygiene, physical health, nutrition, fire safety, toxic household supplies and were introduced to first responders from the Illinois State Police and Adams County EMS departments



*"We promote having healthy habits and things where they can live a more balanced life, and they can carry those habits on as they grow,"* said Brandi Venvertloh, faculty chair for Blessing Teddy Bear Clinic. *"I think it's presented to them in a way that they can learn about it even as young as they are and start to build those habits."*



## Cultural Cafe Focuses on Health Disparities and Mental Health



Shannon Zanger presented to students, faculty and staff about Health Disparities at September's Cultural Cafe. She spoke of the social, political, economic, and environmental disadvantages leading to unequal health outcomes.



Paul Warning, LCPC spoke to students, faculty, and staff during Mental Health Awareness month in February. Warning educated attendees on the importance of mental health and factors of ADHD.

# Faculty

## Highlights



*Callie Asmann  
MSN, RN*

Joined nursing faculty as Assistant Professor.



*Lisa King  
EdD, MSN,  
RN, CNEcl*

Academic Advisor, Nursing Faculty was promoted to Associate Professor and graduated with Doctor of Education (EdD) in Healthcare Leadership from Clarkson College, Omaha, Nebraska.



*Crystal Donald  
MHA, R.T.  
(R)(CT)(MR)  
(AART)*

Assistant Professor of Radiologic Sciences was promoted to Program Director.



*Cheyenne Krutmeier  
BA, R.T. (R)(N)  
(AART)*

Certified Radiology Technician and Nuclear Medicine Technologist hired as a Radiology instructor.



*Megan Genenbacher  
BSN, RN*

Hired as Nursing Faculty and Clinical Preceptor.



*Jessica Loos  
EdD, MSN, RN,  
MBA*

Promoted to Associate Professor of Nursing.



*Lisa Harker  
DNP, RN,  
CNEcl*

Assistant Professor of Nursing passed her NLN Certified Nurse Educator-Clinical exam to become a CNEcl.



*Megan Main*  
BAS, R.T. (R)

Hired as an instructor for the Radiology Department.



*Marla Rigg*  
BS, MLS (ASCP)

Medical Laboratory Clinical Coordinator and instructor received her Master of Education from Culver-Stockton College and has been accepted into the

Nebraska Methodist College's Doctor of Education and Leadership in Healthcare program.



*Chloe Morelock*  
MSN, RN,  
CCRN

Instructor of Nursing, graduated with her MSN from Blessing-Reiman College of Nursing & Health Sciences.



*Abbey Roderick*  
MSN, RN

Hired as an instructor of nursing.



*Shaila O'Dear*  
MSN, RN,  
CNEcl

Assistant Professor Nursing passed her National League for Nursing certification as a clinical instructor CNEcl.



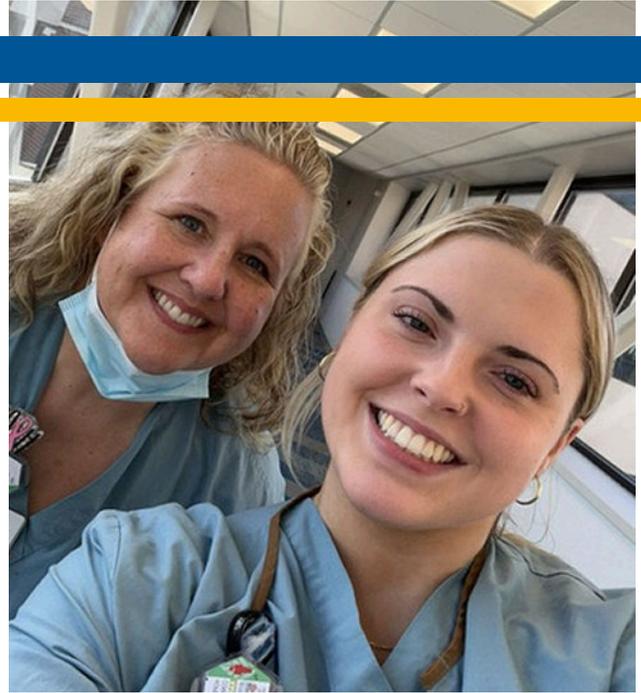
*Brandi Spoonmore*  
AAS, RDMS,  
RVT, RDCS,  
R.T. (R)(ARRT)

Hired as Clinical Coordinator for the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program.



*Lexi Reed*  
MBA, RRT

Assistant Professor, Director of Clinical Education was promoted to Associate Professor of Respiratory Care.



# HOPE CONNORS BSRS, R.T.(R)(ARRT)

**Where did you grow up?**

I grew up in the country in Maywood, Missouri and graduated high school in Palmyra, Missouri.

**Tell us a little about your college background and involvement.**

I attended Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing and Health Sciences for my Radiologic Science degree. I also received a joint degree from Culver-Stockton College in Canton, Missouri. I started out at Culver-Stockton where I finished my prerequisites and lived there to get the "college experience." I lived in Turley Hall which is home of the sorority "Tri-Sigma." I was accepted into Tri-Sigma my freshman year and was a member all four years!

**Why did you choose radiology as a career?**

When I first started college, I was considering majoring in psychology but was not completely sure if that was the path I wanted to take. My mother works at BRCN and introduced me to the many programs it offers. She mentioned radiology and I decided to job shadow my dad since he is a radiologic technologist as well. After shadowing him, I knew that was what I wanted to do. Going into a field of patient care was always an interest of mine, and this field was a perfect fit.

**What modality of radiology do you work in or love doing the most?**

I work as a radiologic technologist at Blessing Hospital. The X-ray department consists of many

different types of procedures. I perform inpatients X-rays in the main department and also do portable X-rays where the patient is located. I also do outpatient X-rays and procedures for certain diagnoses in our fluoroscopy room which can be used for certain procedures such as an arthrogram. I also work in the ER where I perform X-rays for patients involved in traumas or other types of injuries/illnesses. While working in the ER, my responsibilities also include the walk-in clinic. Being a radiologic technologist also consists of going to surgery and operating X-ray equipment for various surgeries such as orthopedic, general, vascular, neurological, and cystoscopy. I also help out in Computed Tomography (CT) when I am able. I am currently working towards taking my registry and getting my license!

**Tell us about your college experience at BRCN and what degrees and certifications do you currently hold?**

My college experience was challenging but very rewarding. I was able to accomplish far more than I thought I could which pushed me to never give up. It was also very comforting to know that I had very supportive instructors there for me every step of the way. I am currently a certified radiologic technologist with a bachelors degree in radiologic science, BSRS, R.T.(R)(ARRT).

## Hope Connors

### Do you have any funny stories from BRCN that you would like to share?

I think some of the funniest memories come from my anatomy class that Amanda Feeney taught. One memory that I have is when we were learning about the Circle of Willis which is abbreviated as "CoW" and Amanda had us go around the class and "moo" like a cow so we would remember it. To be honest, this really did help me remember it!

### What is the most rewarding part of your job?

The most rewarding part of my job would be interacting with patients and helping them have a better day.

### Tell us about a memorable experience working in radiology that has impacted you.

I don't have one specific memorable experience, but I am so inspired by the patients that are battling a chronic illness and still have such a positive outlook on life and are so kind.

### What do you enjoy doing outside of work? Any hobbies, activities, family?

Outside of work I enjoy spending time with my family and friends. I enjoy shopping and going out to eat with them! I also look forward to going on summer vacations with my family that are very memorable.



### What's a fun fact about you we wouldn't know?

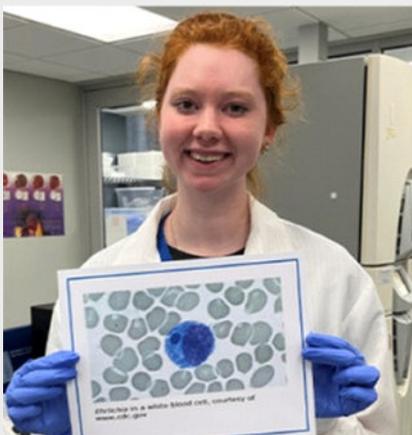
A fun fact about me is that I am a cat lover and have two very spoiled cats named Rocky and Toast. They are both boys and my beloved babies!

### What is something you would tell or share with current BRCN students?

Never give up! No matter how hard it is or may seem, never ever give up! The end is so much closer than you think, and it is so rewarding knowing all your hard work has paid off!

### Any "words of wisdom" for others looking at a career in health care and especially in the field of radiology?

Radiology has many modalities and opportunities for growth. This is a great career that is in high demand!



## 2025 MLT Graduate

# KATIE GRAHAM

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

With only three weeks on the job in the Blessing lab, Katie Graham, a 2025 Medical Laboratory Technology graduate was performing a test on a patient's white blood cells and saw something unusual. She discovered Ehrlichia bacterium that had been transmitted by a tick bite and is the cause for the illness Ehrlichiosis.

# COLLEGE UPDATES

## A YEAR IN REVIEW



January 2025

### **Largest Sophomore Radiology Class**

Blessing-Rieman College's sophomore radiology class was the largest class of radiology students to date!

May 2025

### **Blessing-Rieman College Nursing Graduates Achieve Perfect Pass Rate on National License Exam**

The May 2025 nursing graduates of Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences posted a 100 percent first-time passage rate on the National Council of Licensure Examination (NCLEX). The 2024 pass rate for all first-time, U.S. BSN educated students taking the NCLEX-RN exam is 91% with the state of Illinois average of 87%.

The exam has a minimum of 85 questions with a maximum of 150 questions during the five-hour testing period. The length of the exam is determined by test takers response to each question. Passage of the exam is required to become a licensed, registered nurse.

"A 100% pass rate is not just a statistic – it is representative of the dedication of our graduates, the excellence of our faculty, and the strength of our clinical sites. It reflects our vision of being recognized as a caring and engaged learning community, committed to preparing healthcare leaders for success". Brenda Beshear, PhD., RN, President/CEO.

"I am very proud of this group of students and their dedication to not only finishing their nursing degree but also their preparation to provide excellent nursing care to their future patients. One large aspect of this preparation is in passing the National Council State Board of Nursing (NCSBN) NCLEX-RN exam. This exam is challenging, so I think it's important to give recognition for their hard work. I am also really excited for all of them as they make this huge transition in their career." -Brandi Venvertloh, PhD, RN, BSN Program Coordinator.

"Our nursing faculty provide excellent, high-quality nursing education in the classroom and clinical, along with an unwavering commitment to support and mentor our students even after graduation as they prepare to take the NCLEX-RN exam." – Jan Akright, PhD, RN, Academic Dean.

July 2025

## **Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences Begins New Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program**

Diagnostic sonography is a field within radiology that uses soundwaves to produce images of internal organs and blood vessels. Its specific uses include pregnancy monitoring, and imaging of the abdomen, heart and vascular and musculoskeletal systems.

*“A Sonography program has been highly sought after in this region for some time, and the program has already seen a significant amount of interest,”* said Erin Dickhut, MHA, RDMS, RVT, RT(R)(ARRT), Medical Sonography program director, Blessing-Rieman.

BRCN's first class of Medical Diagnostic Sonography students began Fall 2025 with a class of 10. At graduation, students will receive a Bachelor of Science degree in Diagnostic Medical Sonography.

Traditional freshman and transfer students can earn their degree through their choice of Blessing-Rieman's partner institutions, Culver-Stockton College and Quincy University, to work on pre-requisite courses in their freshman year. Radiology classes and clinical experience with Blessing-Rieman begin in a student's sophomore year. Transfer students who have completed the required pre-requisite courses can enter directly into the sophomore year and earn their degree in 3-years.

In addition to their degree, graduates will earn more than 1,200 hours of hands-on experience in the clinical setting and be eligible to take the national Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographer (RDMS) credentialing examination.

August 2025

## **Blessing-Rieman College Enrollment Grows**

The college saw a double-digit enrollment increase for the 2025-2026 academic year of 11%, with total enrollment reaching 331 students.

*“As the number of high school graduates decreases, Blessing-Rieman is seeing record enrollment in all programs,”* said Dr. Beshears. *“Personalized care and attention that students receive at BRCN make a huge difference in the student's success.”*

Students who qualify can access the Blessing Education Revolving Fund loan program (BERF) which pays for 100% of tuition and fees. This loan will be forgiven for students who choose to stay and work for Blessing Health System.



September 2025

## **Anatomage Table Provides 3D Technology**

Blessing-Rieman College, with grant support through HRSA, is advancing education with the addition of an Anatomage Table.

The Anatomage Table provides digitized images of human cadavers that provide anatomy and medical 3D simulations. Students can explore real-patient cases and analyze tissue structures from different regions of the human body without the need of physical cadavers.

October 2025

## **Blessing-Rieman Programs Earns National Accreditation**

Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences has earned reaccreditation for two of its programs, Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Technology (BSRT).

College faculty and staff prepared extensive self-study reports about the programs followed by participating in on-site surveys by representatives from the accrediting bodies of the programs.

The MSN program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and was awarded a 10-year reaccreditation, the maximum award for continuing accreditation. Officially recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a national accreditation agency, the CCNE is an independent accrediting agency, contributing to the improvement of the public's health. CCNE ensures the quality and integrity of baccalaureate, graduate, and residency programs in nursing.

The BSRT program is accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) and was awarded an 8-year reaccreditation. JRCERT is the only organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation for the accreditation of traditional and distance delivery programs in radiology. JRCERT promotes excellence in education through the application of professional standards that endorse academic integrity and quality, as well as exemplary healthcare.

“Accredited programs are a hallmark of institutional integrity. They signal to students, employers, and society that the education provided is not only current and competitive but also accountable to continuous quality improvement,” states Dr. Brenda Beshears, President/CEO of Blessing-Rieman College.

November 2025

## **More Than \$1 Million Awarded to Blessing Students**

Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences, in cooperation with the Blessing Foundation, has awarded \$1,750,000 in scholarships and grants to Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences students for the 2025-2026 academic year. Fifty-seven students received money from 47 endowed scholarships, four additional scholarships and one general financial aid fund.

Blessing-Rieman has provided professional nursing and healthcare career education since 1891. The College offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Science, Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Care, Bachelor of Science in Diagnostic Medical Sonography, an Associate of Science in Medical Laboratory, an online RN to BSN, an RRT-BSRT, and an online Master of Science in Nursing. Blessing-Rieman offers a variety of pathways to earn your degree including Direct Transfer directly through the College or the Joint Degree program in partnership with Culver-Stockton College, Canton, MO, and Quincy University, Quincy, IL.

The Blessing Foundation, Inc., raises, manages and disburses privately donated gifts to Blessing Health System affiliates to improve the quality, depth and scope of health services available to residents of the region.

# BRCN 2025 SNAPSHOT



**11% INCREASE**  
in Enrollment for 2025-2026

**67% DIRECT TRANSFER**

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- Bachelor of Science in Diagnostic Medical Sonography
- Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Sciences
- Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Care

2025-2026 Academic Year

**\$1,750,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS**

**57** Students received scholarships for Fall 2025



## Commencement #s

- 48 Graduates in May 2025
- 19 Graduates in December 2025

Nurses rank as the **#1** most trusted professional for the 23<sup>rd</sup> year by Gallup's annual Most Honest and Ethical Professions Poll for 2025.

Diagnostic Medical Sonography program began Fall 2025.

**100%**  
May Graduates  
NCLEX Pass Rate

**100%**  
Graduate Employment  
Rating in 2025

# December Commencement

Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences hosted its December Commencement Ceremony on Friday, December 12th at The Crossing Church in Quincy. Nineteen students were recognized; 6 from the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program; 6 from the Registered Nurse-to-Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN-BSN) program; 3 from the Master of Science in Nursing program, 1 from the Post-Master Certificate program, and 3 from the Registered Respiratory Therapy-to-Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Therapy (RRT-BSRT) program.



**Shaina Boal**  
Received the  
**Pi Pi Student Award**  
Outstanding Student  
Performance in:  
Clinical Nursing Practice.

Join us for Spring  
Commencement  
May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026





*Blessing-Rieman College Giving Society*

February 2026

Questions? Call The Blessing Foundation at 217-223-8400 ext. 4800  
or email [blessingfoundation@blessinghealth.org](mailto:blessingfoundation@blessinghealth.org).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

If alumni, graduation year \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate where donation is to be directed:

Amount of gift: \$\_\_\_\_\_ (Give \$1 for every year you have been alumni/graduate)

\_\_\_\_ Blessing Nurses' Alumni Association Scholarship Fund

\_\_\_\_ General Endowment Fund

\_\_\_\_ Establish New Scholarship Fund (\$5,000 minimum)

\_\_\_\_ Direct to the \_\_\_\_\_ Scholarship

\_\_\_\_ Pledge \$\_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ year(s) at \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year

Mail to: 4939 Oak Street, PO Box 7005, Quincy, IL 62305 or give online at  
[www.blessinghealth.org/blessingfoundation](http://www.blessinghealth.org/blessingfoundation).



# The Giving Society

Donations listed in this issue of *The Pulse* reflect gifts from January 1 through December 31, 2025.

## **Blessing Nurses' Alumni Association Scholarship Fund**

Karen Campbell  
Code Consultants, Inc.  
Janet S. Conrady  
Annie H. Hedeman  
Dr. Patricia Kupina  
Jill A. Miller  
Carol Rossel

*In Memory of Ruth M. Fjelstad  
Karen R. Hardy*

## **Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing & Health Sciences General Endowment Fund**

*Ann Childers Wenneker Scholarship  
Ann Wenneker Estate\**

*Brad & Bonnie Billings Scholarship  
Brad and Bonnie Billings*

*Bill & Zig Brown Scholarship  
Zig Brown*

*Dr. Carl W. and Jane Hagler Scholarship  
John Hagler  
Sabrina Hagler  
Sarah Hagler*

*Elizabeth Rauh Keys Scholarship  
Nick and Karen Keys*

*Elkins Sister's Scholarship  
ADM Archer Daniels Midland Company*

*James Forrest Scholarship  
John and Linda Kestner*

*Maureen Kahn Scholarship  
Maureen and Barney Kahn*

*Ellen Kuhn Phelps & Colonel Fred Phelps Nursing  
Scholarship  
Col Fred and Mrs. Ellen Phelps*

*Dick & Carole Scranton Scholarship  
Alan and Susan Kill*

*Marilyn Murphy Shepherd Scholarship  
Tom and Beth Kenney*

*Lucille V. Stuffing Scholarship  
Dan and Sheryl Voorhis*

*Lawrence L. Swearingen Scholarship  
Lawrence Swearingen*

*Kevin D. & Dr. Sheila Capp Taber Scholarship  
Kevin and Dr. Sheila Capp Taber*

*In Honor of Robert and Phyllis Hofmeister's  
Anniversary  
Gerald and Virginia Holzgrafe*

*In Honor of Zig Brown to Bill & Zig Brown  
Scholarship  
Robin Taylor*

*In Honor of Lawrence Swearingen to Lawrence L.  
Swearingen Scholarship  
Brad and Bonnie Billings*

*In Honor of James Waterkotte to Frances  
Waterkotte  
Scholarship  
Brad and Bonnie Billings*

*In Memory of Nancy Beattie  
Susan Brugler  
Kris Johnson  
C. David Nuessen  
Mary Jane Rischar  
Michael and Deanna Smith  
Wayne and Richene Stotts  
Mickey and Karen Uppinghouse*

*In Memory of Maryana Mettler to Norma Jean  
McNay Scholarship  
Conrad McNay*

*In Memory of Ashley Steighorst  
Robert and Sarah Roman*

# The Giving Society



Donations listed in this issue of The Pulse reflect gifts from January 1 through December 31, 2025.

*In Memory of John T. Thompson to Michael Thompson Student Crisis Fund*  
Zig Brown  
Center Drive Neighbors & Friends  
Bob and Anna Awerkamp Dickson  
Robert and Katherine Harman  
Johnathan and Julie Hershey  
Bernard and Susie Koch  
Arno Panicucci  
Gordon and Michele Panicucci  
Terri Smith  
Kay Thuesen  
Susan Vondrak

*In Memory of Betsy F. Wharton*  
Frances Mesplay

*B-RCN General Endowment Fund*  
Sheila Capp  
Donald Gnuse

*Caring Cupboard Donation*  
Quincy Service League

## **B-RCN & Health Sciences Programs Crisis & Scholarship Fund**

Robert and Phyllis Hofmeister  
Melody Munson-McGee  
Mr. Burks Oakley II and Mrs. Loretta Bowen Oakley

## **B-RCN & Health Sciences Unrestricted Fund**

Anonymous Donor  
Steve and Cathy Meckes  
Joseph Messina and Mary Ann Klein

\*Designates deceased

## The Blessing Box

In 2022, students in the Community and Population Health class identified a lack of food resources available to residents on the east side of Quincy. After much discussion and planning, students, faculty, and staff developed the idea for the Blessing Box. With the assistance of community agencies, food drives, and media support, the Blessing Box was installed in the Spring of 2022.

If you would like to help fill the Blessing Box, you may drop off food items to Blessing-Rieman or place items in the box located at 3600 Maine Street Quincy, IL 62301.

