

2015 AWARD & SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

Lynnette Vehrs, MN, RN

An inspirational nursing and health care leader, Lynnette has a mission to change the healthcare system to optimize nurses' contribution in providing healthcare for all. She has held diverse clinical, education, community, and leadership positions with a central focus on advocacy and policy-making. With a contagious passion for nursing, she advocates for nurses to have a voice at the table. Not only has Lynnette been a nursing and professional leader, she is highly committed to growing the next generation. Known as "the highest nursing advocate; a contagious energizer" for students, she worked on the faculty at WSU College of Nursing from 2009-2014, and continues as a guest faculty post-recent retirement, to share her expertise in community health, leadership, and management. Lynnette truly leads by example in sharing "how" to advocate for policies important to nursing practice and healthcare, and how to speak with legislators. Additionally, Lynnette articulated a mandate for students to become active leaders in the workplace, community, and political arena, and charged them to become involved with their professional organizations. She has been recognized as a stellar nurse educator, including receiving the STCU Undergraduate Faculty Award. We are pleased to nominate Lynnette Vehrs for her stellar lifetime commitment to her students, the community, and all citizens of Washington State. Her leadership has no bounds, and we are all honored to be her friends and colleagues.

\$1,000 Scholarship Recipients

Ruth Bryant, MS, RN, CWOCN, PhD Student, WSU

Following graduation from the PhD program, Ruth hopes to obtain an academic joint appointment with a health care facility as a Nurse Scientist, providing an avenue to facilitate nursing research in the clinical setting for faculty, students, and staff nurses. Ruth also hopes to secure at least one grant for a clinical research study and to develop a mechanism that enables clinical care nurses to participate in clinical research. Ruth contends that being involved in your nursing organization provides the opportunity to 1) learn and stay abreast of new advances in knowledge and technology, 2) lend a voice to the discussion of future needs, and 3) to broaden one's perspective by listening to views of colleagues.

Wendy Buenzli, PhD, RN, Univ of Southern Mississippi

Wendy is the Associate Dean of Nursing at Spokane Community College. While serving in this role, she completed her PhD in Nursing and will graduate this May. Wendy's goal is to provide authentic leadership for nurse education and develop the best nurse education program in Spokane. Wendy is an advocate for shaping, empowering and growing the future of nurses. She feels strongly about participation in nursing professional organizations, as they provide nurses with education, training and a voice, as well as interprofessional collaboration.

Aaron Roberts, RN, BSN, DNP Student, WSU

A commitment to a nursing career has been a lifelong process for Aaron, as he followed in his mother's footsteps as an RN. Upon completion of the DNP at WSU, Aaron intends to stay in the Inland Northwest with the goal of providing comprehensive psychiatric care on both inpatient and outpatient settings. His studies have focused on mental health along with the dually diagnosed with substance abuse disorders. Aaron emphasizes that nursing professional organizations help guide the career of nursing with a supportive role to ensure rights and regulations with nursing and direct patient care.

Amber Hambrecht, RN, BSN Student, Gonzaga University

After graduating in December 2015, Amber hopes to work as a pediatric nurse and apply to the University of Washington to begin the Pediatric Nurse Practitioner program. Amber strives to continue her education to have a stronger impact on planning of care for her patients. She is an advocate for effective self care including exercise, nutrition and emotional wellbeing. Amber believes that nursing organizations keep staff up to date on current standards of practice, protect nurses safety and wellbeing, and provide a sense of community.