

# THANK YOU

for providing support  
to our **Pirate™ Nurses**

## 2025 ECU College of Nursing Impact Report

Thanks to the generous support of donors, **East Carolina University® College of Nursing** continues to shape the future of health care by offering premier training and educational opportunities for tomorrow's nurses. Through the **ECU Health Foundation**, donors continue to provide essential funding to critical scholarships, faculty support and research opportunities that enhance achievements and reflect our mission and values. Thank you for fueling this life-changing work.

### Together, we're meeting the nursing need in eastern North Carolina

**Philanthropic support is critical** to filling the nursing shortage in North Carolina. Donor funds help move the College of Nursing forward, ensuring students, faculty and staff are provided the resources they need to succeed.



**274** endowed scholarships totaling **\$391,285** awarded in the 2024-2025 season.



Approximately **\$15,000** awarded for critical faculty development in 2024-2025.



**100%** Advanced Nursing Board pass rate and a **99.57%** NCLEX pass rate.



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Your impact is powerful and deeply felt. Because of your generosity, the College of Nursing stands as a leader in our state and across the nation, preparing future nurses who will deliver the highest quality care to patients and communities. Philanthropy fuels scholarships, innovation, and opportunity; without it, we would not be meeting the urgent need to address the nursing shortage in North Carolina. I am profoundly grateful for your partnership and commitment, which ensures that Pirate Nurses are ready to serve where they are needed most.

- **Bimbola F. Akintade PhD, MBA, APRN, FAANP, FAAN**

Dean and Professor  
ECU College of Nursing



[ECUHealthFoundation.org/nursing](https://www.ecuhealthfoundation.org/nursing)





## SPOTLIGHT | Critical Research Funding

Substance Use Disorder (SUD) is the leading cause of maternal death and family dissolution in the U.S., with eastern North Carolina experiencing some of the most severe outcomes nationwide

Thanks to a **\$15,486 grant from the ECU Health Foundation**, ECU College of Nursing faculty Courtney Caiola, PhD and Chandra Speight, PhD, in partnership with David Ryan, MD, founding clinician of ECU IMPACT, are leading a new initiative to improve outcomes in our region. They are working together, along with community partners, to improve regional screening and referral processes so at-risk groups can be connected to ECU IMPACT's evidence based perinatal and addiction services.

This project reflects the shared mission of the College of Nursing and ECU Health, and is **made possible by the generosity of ECU Health Foundation donors** who are driving innovative solutions where they are needed most.

## LASTING LEGACY | Mary Lou Schulz Fisher Scholarship

Donors like Atticus Fisher understand the **life-changing impact** of nurses because he saw it firsthand in his mother, Mary Lou Fisher, whose compassion and skill touched lives across the globe.

Mary Lou Schulz Fisher graduated with a Bachelor of Science in nursing from East Carolina University in 1985, and went on to live a full life as a successful travel nurse.

Mary Lou's excellence caught the attention of President Jimmy Carter, who invited her to join a medical mission to Costa Rica. Inspired following the trip, she continued her education to earn a Master of Science in Nursing, which opened doors for her to serve internationally with Samaritan's Purse. Through this work, she cared for people in need around the world.



Mary Lou passed away in 2016, but **her legacy of compassion continues**. To honor her lifelong commitment to caring for others, the Fisher family established the Mary Lou Schulz Fisher Scholarship at ECU, the place where her nursing journey began. To date, the scholarship has provided **\$1,000 awards** to five students.



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As a senior pursuing a BSN degree, this scholarship will significantly help ease the financial burden of my education. The Fisher family's support allows me to focus more on my academic and career goals without the much-added stress of finances. Not only that, but it encourages and motivates me to work hard and make the most of the opportunities that have been provided to me, just like Mary Lou Fisher did herself. I hope that one day I will be as inspirational as her.

- Haley Gipson

Mary Lou Schulz Fisher Scholarship recipient



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