



# Nightingale Nursing Education

## Case For Support

### Executive Summary

In 2023, Bassett Healthcare Network (BHN) established a fund to support excellence in nursing practice, education, and research. That fund, the Nightingale Fund for Nursing Excellence, was originally founded in 2007 by Maureen Murray, a longtime nurse at Bassett. Murray worked with Friends of Bassett to establish financial support for nurses pursuing skills and knowledge. The fund is available to nurses at all five of BHN's hospitals, including A.O. Fox Hospital, Bassett Medical Center, Cobleskill Regional Hospital, Little Falls Hospital, and O'Connor Hospital. The program includes financial support for professional development, recognition opportunities, and community stewardship and has historically been supported through donations from patients, families, nurses, and employees.

In addition to the Nightingale Fund for Nursing Excellence, O'Connor Hospital (OCH) established an endowment fund to support nurses in Delaware County who pursue careers at OCH.

### Impact

More than \$67,445 was invested in 2024 to support Bassett nurses; 32 nurses received funding to participate in leadership training, fellowships, various nursing care conferences, and coursework to acquire new skills and certifications.

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***“The Nightingale Fund for Nursing Excellence is a vital component to supporting our nurses desire to continually improve and expand their skill set and knowledge. Allowing them to perform at a higher level ultimately benefits patient care and promotes positive quality outcomes.”***

**Angela Belmont, DNP, RN, NEA-BC**

Senior VP & Chief Nursing Executive, Bassett Healthcare Network

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Susan Oakes Ferrucci, DNP, MSN, RN, CNS, President and Chief Nursing Officer of Bassett's critical access hospitals, says investing in nursing professional development pays enormous dividends. "Patients benefit from improved care, and supporting our nurses' desires to grow professionally translates to higher recruitment and retention," says Ferrucci.

The nursing endowment at OCH has already supported several employees, including a nurse who received wound care certification, a nurse studying to become a nurse practitioner, and a patient care technician who is taking nursing classes.

The Nightingale Fund has also provided 17 nurses with recognition awards in 2022 and 2023.

## The Need

Friends of Bassett seeks to raise \$40,000 for the Nightingale Fund for Nursing Excellence to advance BHN's nursing culture by encouraging, recognizing, and rewarding nurses who pursue professional growth opportunities.

The New York State Department of Health in 2023 reported that the state will face a shortage of nearly 40,000 nurses in just seven years. To better compete in a shrinking pool of nurses, Bassett recently revamped its recruitment strategies and created a position dedicated to attracting and retaining nursing staff. The results thus far are encouraging. In 2024, the network hired 77 new licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and new 178 registered nurses (RNs).



Bassett's nursing leaders have received positive feedback from nurses who successfully applied for continuing education dollars. Among them is Julie Falcone, MSN, RN-BC, a nurse educator who completed a nursing professional development certification prep course in 2022, ahead of an exam. "I wish every nurse would consider embracing the amazing opportunity we have with this fund," says Falcone. "It removes financial barriers, allowing us to enhance our knowledge and enjoy personal fulfillment."

Nicholas Souza, RN, attended the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses' National Teaching Institute in 2023 with assistance from the Nightingale Fund. Souza, who works in Bassett Medical Center's intensive care unit, says the conference provided knowledge that helped his research related to resuscitating patients who suffer cardiac arrest following heart surgery. Souza completed a cardiac surgery resuscitation project that is improving patient safety.

To support Bassett nurses through a gift to the fund, visit [give.bassett.org](https://give.bassett.org) or call **607-547-3928**.



**Friends of  
Bassett Healthcare Network**

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