

## Initiatives Supporting PhD Nursing Students

### **Jonas Philanthropies**

Launched in 2008 to address the nursing faculty shortage, the Jonas Nurse Scholars initiative was created to improve health care through targeted investments in high-potential doctoral nursing students whose research and clinical foci address our nation's most pressing healthcare needs. Jonas initiated this program in 2008 with support for 54 PhD students at 22 nursing schools in 17 states. Through its partnership with AACN that commenced in 2011, the program has expanded on a national scale to accommodate more than 1,086 scholars from 144 schools in 50 states.

Through the Jonas Scholars program, students in PhD and DNP programs received \$10,000 in support from the foundation and \$10,000 in matching funds from the schools where students were enrolled. In addition, each school pledged to support up to \$2,500 for each scholar to attend the Jonas Scholar Leadership Conference, which was held biennially during AACN's October meeting.

Since its inception, the Jonas Philanthropies has invested \$10,835,000 in this program, with schools providing \$10,572,500 in matching funds. This funding has been provided to 703 PhD students, 376 DNP students, 5 joint PhD/DNP students, and 2 EdD students.

### **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

In 2012, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) launched the Future of Nursing Scholars program to support the recommendation in the Institute of Medicine's *Future of Nursing* report, which called for doubling the number of nurses in the U.S. with doctoral degrees. Based at the University of Pennsylvania, the program was developed to create a diverse cadre of PhD-prepared nurses who are committed to long-term leadership careers that advance science and discovery, strengthen nursing education, and bring transformational change to health care.

Through the Future of Nursing Scholars program, students enrolled full-time in a three-year, research-focused PhD program received \$75,000 over three years from RWJF and \$50,000 in matching funds from affiliated schools of nursing. The program provided scholarships, mentoring, and leadership development activities, as well as postdoctoral research support.

RWJF contributed \$20 million over five years to support the program's activities, with additional funding support provided by Independence Blue Cross Foundation, United Health Foundation, North Shore Long Island Jewish Health System, and Rhode Island Foundation. A total of 213 PhD students from 44 schools of nursing received funding as Future of Nursing Scholars by the time the program ceased disbursing funds in 2017.

### **Rita and Alex Hillman Foundation**

In 1989, Rita Hillman, the president of the Hillman Family Foundation, emerged from a serious illness with a deepened appreciation for the role of nurses. In a move that would chart a new course for the foundation, she established the first Hillman Scholarship Program for Nursing in 1990. Seeking to address a city- and country-wide nursing shortage, the program was piloted at the

University of Pennsylvania, where scholar nurses received financial and other support for their education in return for working two years at a New York City hospital. The Foundation's interest in nursing soon expanded to include externships and post-graduate clinical mentoring as well as effort to recruit pre-college students and mid-career changers into nursing. By the time of Rita's death in 2007, nearly 1,500 nurses had completed or enhanced their education through Hillman scholarships and clinical mentoring programs.

Today, the foundation, which has been renamed the Rita and Alex Hillman Foundation, focuses its grantmaking strategy on nursing education, research, and implementation. Programs are designed to cultivate a new generation of nurse innovators; equip young nurse researchers with the skills necessary to lead change in health care; support innovations with a high potential for patient impact; encourage the rapid development of promising research; promote the translation of tested innovations into policy and practice; and ensure that significant innovations reach the greatest number of patients. The foundation's signature program, the Hillman Scholars in Nursing Innovation, is designed to produce the next generation of nurse researchers. This program is only available to PhD students at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.