

MARCH / APRIL 2025



Dear Alumni and Supporters,

I'm excited to share some important updates from our recent Alumni Association board meeting. As we continue our "Year of Gratitude", we are proud to celebrate the incredible generosity of our alumni and supporters who make our mission possible.

This year, the Alumni Association will provide \$24,000 in admission scholarships—the largest amount in our history! This remarkable achievement was made possible by the generous response from our alumni and friends, who answered our call for support in 2024. These scholarships will help working nurses advance their education at Upstate, strengthening their ability to provide exceptional care in our shared communities.

Additionally, the board has approved the **largest operating budget in the Alumni Association's history**, allowing us to launch alumni meet-ups, host activities to thank our dedicated alumni and supporters, and introduce new student initiatives to support the next generation of **nursing** professionals.

Another exciting development is the establishment of a [donor-advised fund with The Upstate Foundation](#). This investment will allow us to earn market returns alongside the Foundation's endowed and donor-advised funds, ensuring long-term growth and the ability to expand or create new initiatives without real-locating alumni contributions.

Thank you for your continued support of the Upstate College of **Nursing** and our Alumni Association. Your generosity fuels our ability to support students, engage alumni, and strengthen our **nursing** community. Stay connected with us through this **news**letter and on social media—we look forward to seeing you at upcoming events (like the ones listed below)!

All the best,

Spencer Champagne

Director

Upstate College of **Nursing** Alumni Association

# Spotlight:



## RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT: ADVANCING STROKE REHABILITATION

Congratulations to Dr. Mary Catherine Forgea, PhD, RN, Assistant Professor at Upstate Medical University, on the publication of her recent study in the *Journal of Neuroscience Nursing*. Her research examines key factors that influence functional improvement for older adults undergoing initial stroke rehabilitation, with a focus on early intervention and patient-centered care.

Learn more about Dr. Forgea and her research by reading the full spotlight on our website:

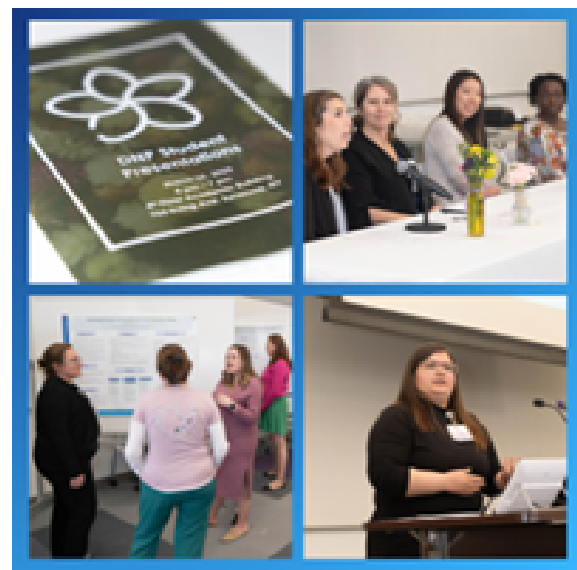
[Click to Read](#)

## NEWS AND UPDATES



**FREE 4 YEAR DEGREE FOR NURSES**

Jeanette Jackson, who was interviewed by Spectrum News, works at the Joslin Diabetes Center in Syracuse is earning her BS Degree in nursing at no cost to her.



## Upstate Edge Program Featured on Spectrum News

### UPSTATE EDGE: A TUITION-FREE PATH TO YOUR BSN

Did you catch Upstate Edge on Spectrum News? This exciting program offers full-time nurses at SUNY Upstate the opportunity to earn their BS—for free. Designed to support career advancement while addressing New York's growing nursing shortage, Upstate Edge provides flexible online coursework in 16- or 22-month tracks.

Hear from students and learn more about the program here:

[Spectrum Local News](#)

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR DNP STUDENTS!

On March 25, 2025, the Alumni Association sponsored the DNP Poster Showcase, where our DNP students took center stage presenting their final scholarly projects—evidence-based initiatives designed to improve patient care and transform clinical practice. The evening featured presentations from Kayla Butler and Jayne Vamvakias, a faculty-led panel discussion, and an engaging poster session highlighting the hard work and innovation of our students.

Join us in celebrating their achievements! Read the full recap and view event photos here:

[Alumni Events Page](#)



practitioners today.

### Honoring a Trailblazer:

For Women's History Month, we honor Dr. Loretta C. Ford (1920–2025), a pioneering nursing leader whose legacy transformed healthcare forever. A World War II Veteran and internationally recognized trailblazer, Dr. Ford co-founded the nurse practitioner profession in 1965 alongside Dr. Henry K. Silver, launching the nation's first pediatric nurse practitioner program. Her visionary approach to nursing education and holistic care reshaped the role of nurses and expanded access to healthcare, particularly in underserved communities. As the founding dean of the nurse practitioner program at the University of Rochester, Dr. Ford empowered generations of nurses to lead with innovation and compassion. Her impact continues to shape the profession and inspire more than 355,000 nurse

# Upcoming Events

The SUNY Upstate Center for Bioethics  
& Humanities Presents the

## 2025 Reiss Lecturer in Ethics and Equity

College of Nursing Event with Dr. Jennifer James

Jennifer James, PhD, MSW, MSSP, is an Associate Professor in the Institute for Health and Aging, the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and the Bioethics Program at UCSF.



## REISS LECTURE 2025: CONFRONTING INJUSTICE IN HEALTHCARE

Mark your calendars! On April 10–11, 2025, the Center for Bioethics and Humanities welcomes Dr. Jennifer James, this year's Reiss Lecturer in Ethics and Equity. A leading sociologist, bioethicist, and Black feminist scholar, Dr. James will offer a thought-provoking series of talks exploring how race, gender, and incarceration shape health and healthcare in the U.S. Her lectures will dive into topics such as structural racism in medicine, reproductive justice, and the ethics of carceral systems.

Learn more and register:

[bit.ly/ReissLecture2025](https://bit.ly/ReissLecture2025)

## WHITE COAT ROCK:

Funding the future of healthcare

**Thurs. May 15th at Funk'n Waffles**

Featuring Upstate Medical University's own  
Dr. Chin and Spinal Chords



**Tickets:**

**\$15 in advance or  
\$20 at the door**

with CNY favorite  
Jam Theory



Proceeds benefitting

**UPSTATE**  
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY  
NURSING  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

**UPSTATE**  
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH PROFESSIONS  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Get ready for a night of **live music, community, and support for future healthcare professionals at White Coat Rock!**

This exciting fundraiser for Upstate College of **Nursing** and College of Health Professions Alumni Associations brings together the best of both worlds: a high-energy lineup featuring talent from our very own Upstate community and a local fan favorite to keep the party going.

**Dr. Chin's band, Spinal Chords**, will kick things off, delivering a can't-miss set for our hospital crowd. Made up of Upstate faculty, staff, and students, this band knows how to bring the perfect blend of skill and sound—on and off the stage.

Then, **Jam Theory** takes over to keep the energy high, closing out the night with their signature crowd-pleasing jams.

Join us for a **rockin' good time—all for a great cause!**

For more info or to get your advance tickets [CLICK HERE](#)

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## Did our alumni survey land in your mailbox?

Great **news** - there's still time to tell us what YOU want!

Whether you mail back the survey you received or you take it online, we want to hear your thoughts. Your feedback helps us make sure we're serving our alumni community and that begins with you.

Thanks for taking a moment to share!