



Winter 2025



Dear Alumni and Supporters,

As we enter this season of gratitude, I find myself reflecting on how thankful I am for each of you and for the incredible journey we have shared over the past two years. Since stepping into the role of Alumni Director in August 2023, I have had the privilege of working alongside a community of remarkable nursing professionals whose commitment, compassion, and generosity continually inspire me.

Together, we have accomplish so much. During this time, we created four new scholarship funds and a student emergency fund, ensuring that more working nurses can pursue their education at Upstate without financial barriers. We launched new signature events - our inaugural White Coat Rock concert, the first Emerging Trends gathering, and the most successful Whitney Lecture in the history of the series. Each of these milestones reflects the strength our our alumni community and your belief in the mission of the College of Nursing.

It is with a full heart that I share that I have accepted a new position within the Upstate Foundation as the Director of Grateful Patient, Family Engagement, and Annual Giving. In this role, I will work with patients and families who wish to express gratitude for the care they received at Upstate Medical University. I'm deeply grateful that this new chapter will still allow me to support our alumni, this time by partnering with you through the meaningful impact you make at the bedside.

Although this is my final newsletter as Alumni Director, it is not a farewell. My contact information will remain the same, and I hope you will reach out at any time. In the next edition, you will have the opportunity to meet the new Alumni Director, who I know will bring fresh energy and a deep commitment to serving this extraordinary community. I look forward to cheering on the continued growth and success of the Alumni Association in the years ahead.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support, your kindness, and the meaningful work we have accomplished together. It has been an honor to serve as your Alumni Director.

All the best,

Spencer Champagne

Director

Grateful Patient, Family Engagement, and Annual Giving

ALUMNI NEWS



IN MEMORIAM: BARBARA ANN BLACK, MS, ANP

The Upstate College of Nursing Alumni Association remembers with deep gratitude our longtime board member **Barbara Ann Black**, who passed away on November 4.

A dedicated nurse, educator, and leader, Barbara served on our Alumni Board since 2016, contributing her insight, compassion, and unwavering commitment to advancing nursing education. Over the course of her distinguished career, she served as Assistant Dean of the College of Nursing and as director of the Center for Continuing Nursing Education, leaving a

lasting legacy of mentorship and excellence. Beyond her professional achievements, Barbara will be remembered for her warmth, energy, and generosity of spirit.

Our thoughts are with her family and loved ones as we honor her remarkable life and contributions to the Upstate community.

Read her full obituary here:

[Barbara Black Obituary \(2025\) - Manlius, NY - Syracuse Post Standard](#)


From the College of Nursing



UPSTATE
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF NURSING

INSTANT ADMISSION DAY — YOUR NEXT STEP IN NURSING

Ready to advance your nursing career? The College of Nursing is hosting an *Instant Admission Day*. We're making it convenient and simple to apply and receive an on-the-spot admission decision for eligible programs. Meet one-on-one with admissions counselors and faculty, explore flexible options for working nurses, and learn how you can move forward toward your next degree or certificate.

 **In-person:** November 21 | **Virtual:** November 20–23
Admission decisions confirmed by November 26.

[Learn more here](#)

The College of Nursing is seeking volunteers to serve as Standardized Patients (SPs)!

We're looking for individuals to portray real-life patient scenarios in order to help students practice and refine their clinical and communication skills. This rewarding opportunity allows you to play a vital role in nursing education by providing students with realistic, hands-on learning experiences in a safe and supportive environment. Training is provided, and no prior medical experience is required.

If you're interested in learning more or would like to volunteer, please contact [Justin Waryold, DNP, RN, ANP-C, ACNP-BC, GS-C, CNE, FAANP](#).

Upcoming Events



NEW NURSING ALUMNI SHIRTS - JUST IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

We've added two fresh designs to our Nursing Alumni Bonfire store—perfect for gifting or showing off your Upstate pride all year long!

RETRO UPSTATE ALUMNI DESIGN

This new throwback-style shirt is a nod to vintage college spirit, featuring the Upstate Medical University logo on the front and a bold College of Nursing Alumni design on the back. Available in long sleeves, quarter-zips, and even tie-dye, it's a cool new design to keep you warm even in Central NY.

Holiday #NurseLife™ (Limited Edition!)

Spread good vibes this season with our holiday-inspired design that celebrates the heart of nursing. This limited edition is available only through December 15, but you should order by November 25 to make sure it arrives in time to wear (or gift!) for the holidays.

All proceeds from the Nursing Alumni Bonfire shop shirt sales support Nursing Alumni Association scholarships, student initiatives, and alumni programming—so your purchase gives back, too!

[CHECK OUT OUR STORE](#)

Stay "on the pulse" of our events, initiatives and opportunities by following us!

