



Eastern-in-the-News



40-&-8 AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS TO FOUR EASTERN NURSING STUDENTS

Moorefield — Sept. 10 — Four new nursing students will find their paths to an RN degree a little smoother this year, thanks to scholarship awards from a local veterans group. The Hardy County Forty-and-Eight “*Voyagers*” selected the students from a group of applicants who are just starting the nursing program this fall at Eastern WV Community and Technical College.

“We’ve chosen our scholarship winners very carefully over the years and they have all done very well,” said Tom Denney, chair of the Forty-and-Eight’s Nurse Scholarship Committee. “We’re real proud of our nurses.”

This year’s award marks the fifth time the veterans have supported student nurses in Moorefield, and the second time they’ve done so under Eastern’s new nursing program. Julie Cook of Brandywine, Tammy Rowe of Franklin, Heather Thorne of Maysville and Amanda Wolfe of Moorefield, will each receive \$500 each semester. So by the end of the academic year in May, that will bring the total 40 & 8 scholarship awards since 2004 to some \$20-thousand.

“We’re pretty particular with whom we pick for the scholarship, and we never had anybody flunk out yet,” Denny told the student nurses. “It’s not an easy course, we know that. And we’re expecting you all to roll high.”



Four new nursing students received \$500-per-semester scholarships from the Hardy County Forty-and-Eight this month. All of the honorees are starting the nursing program this fall at Eastern WV Community and Technical College.

Shown, from left: Tom Denney, Chair of the Forty-and-Eight Nurse Training Scholarship Committee; students Tammy Rowe and Heather Thorne; Bob Cross, Forty-and-Eight member;

student Amanda Wolfe, Forty-and-Eight treasurer Gary Evans; student Julie Cook; Eastern President Dr. Charles “Chuck” Terrel

All of the scholarship winners this year are mothers, so they’re all balancing their family responsibilities with their studies. Of the four, Tammy Rowe, who has eight children, may face the biggest challenge of them all.

“They range in age from 22 years to 11 months, with two already in college. So it’s pretty busy at our house,” she acknowledged. Rowe credited her “excellent baby-sitter” and her “husband who has picked up the slack” for being able to handle it all.

Rowe first chose the Eastern program because of its supportive financial aid office and because “I live in Franklin and Eastern is close by. It would be triple the cost if I went to school in Virginia,” she said. During 18 months at Eastern before starting the nursing program, she took nursing pre-requisite courses and other classes towards an associate science degree. “I’m still interested in the double degree,” she said, and she may finish up the science degree after she graduates.

A 1990 graduate of Franklin in High School, after 16 years as a factory worker, and another four as a stay-at-home, “I wanted something that was not just a job, but a career, something that would be a dynamic job, not the same thing every day. And I like people,” she said. Nursing seemed to her like a good match.

With three daughters to look after, Julie Cook also has her hands full. An LPN for the last nine years in the Pendleton County school system, and with mentally handicapped patients and in a nursing home, “I’ve always known I wanted to be a nurse, and finally things have worked out where I’m going back for my RN.”

She also chose Eastern for its convenience. “I needed something that was close to where I am and something that would fit into my work schedule and with my kids.” Her daughters are 20, 16 and 14.

Cook also took nursing pre-requisites at Eastern before starting the nursing program, and once she gets her degree, she plans to enter obstetrical nursing. “Whenever I was in LPN school, I just absolutely loved everything about it. It’s a job,” she said, “but it doesn’t feel like a job.”

For Amanda Wolfe, having relatives diagnosed with cancer sparked her interest in cancer care. “I’m interested in oncology. I like to help people and the majority of people I have known with cancer — friends, parents and grandparents — have survived.”

Wolfe started her Eastern career taking general education courses while still in high school. After graduating in 2011, she continued at the college with Anatomy. “It fascinates me I like learning how the body systems work and how every part relates and pertains to one another,” she said.

Having a one-year old girl at home “makes it a little more stressful to study.” Still, she enjoys the nursing program. “It really involves a lot of critical thinking — that’s what (instructors) Eleanor and Jill stress all the time,” she noted. “And it’s a different kind of test-taking — it really pertains to what I’m going to do out in the real world, working.”

Heather Thorne comes to nursing following her first career as a stay-at-home wife with an eight-year old son. After working jobs as a cake decorator at Food Lion, and an administrative assistant with Grant County Mulch, “you get to a point in life when you know it’s time for a change,” she said.

“So I decided to check into going to school, and a friend’s sister told me about Eastern’s nursing program.” As one who loved biology, anatomy and physiology in high school, and who thought she was going to be a veterinarian, “I just decided I had nothing to lose, so I took the Accuplacer (placement test) at the college and enrolled in English 101.”

She applied to take the pre-nursing test, “bought the study guide, studied and worked hard to take the test,” she recalled, “and jumped for joy when I got the letter that I was accepted into the nursing program. Life is too short to look back and have regrets, and so when this opportunity came available, I thought I had nothing to lose.”

Even with her strong high school background in science, Thorne acknowledged having “many fears and inhibitions,” and she sought advice from Eastern’s academic counselors. “It had been 18 years since I’d been in high school, and I’m pursuing something that so many people have worked so hard for, and have had a goal and a plan, and been taking classes. So I feel so very fortunate that I’m of the 20 chosen ones in the nursing classes, and so fortunate to have this second chance. Sometimes you have to wait for the right moment for things to work out.”

With the Forty-and-Eight scholarship covering most of their textbook charges, all four nursing students feel very grateful and honored for their good fortune and for the veterans’ generosity. “You’re the ones who make this program successful,” Gary Evans, treasurer for the Forty-and-Eight chapter (“*voiture*”) 1623, told the awardees.

“The only part of my job I don’t like is doing the voting,” said Chair Denney, “and picking the people, because we’d like to give it to the other students too, but we just don’t have the money.”

The veterans’ group sells their far-and-wide-famous ham sandwiches to support the scholarship fund, but last year lost their franchise at the Moorefield Fireman’s Bash to commercial food vendors, said Bob Cross, who described himself as a “mule-in-the-collar” who helps “carry the load” for the Committee.

To make up for the lost Bash business, the Forty-and-Eight offered their sandwiches at last year’s Hardy County Heritage Weekend. “We only sold sandwiches one day at last year’s Heritage weekend, and we ran out of ham before noon. We made a big \$2,000 dollars,” Cross noted. “And this year we hope to be out there all three days, if the weather cooperates. We hope to earn double the amount of money this time.”

Chair Denney never tires of dreaming for a scholarship angel who would donate a larger sum to endow the scholarship fund. “Wouldn’t that be great — if there were a retired nurse, or someone who had some extra money and wanted to put it in some kind of program?” Anyone within the reach of his voice who is so inclined should get in touch with Tom Denney, chair of the Nurse Scholarship Committee of the Hardy County Forty-and-Eight, at 402 Maple Avenue, Moorefield, 26836.

Organized in 1920 as an American Legion national honor society of veterans focused on community service, the Forty-and-Eight takes its name from the wooden boxcars used in France to transport American “*Doughboys*” to the front during World War I. Bearing a “40/8” symbol on its side, each boxcar (or “*voiture*”) could hold either 40 men or eight horses at a time. To honor its origins in the experiences and sacrifices of those American soldiers, the society still uses French terms for its officers, member chapters and ceremonies.

For more information about Eastern’s financial aid opportunities, programs of study, workforce training and community education, call toll free: 877-982-2322; or check the College’s website: “www.easternwv.edu”.

Serving the residents of Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Pendleton and Tucker counties, and fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College is a comprehensive and equal opportunity community and technical college bringing the resources and assets of Education That Works to the families, communities and employers of the Potomac Highlands.